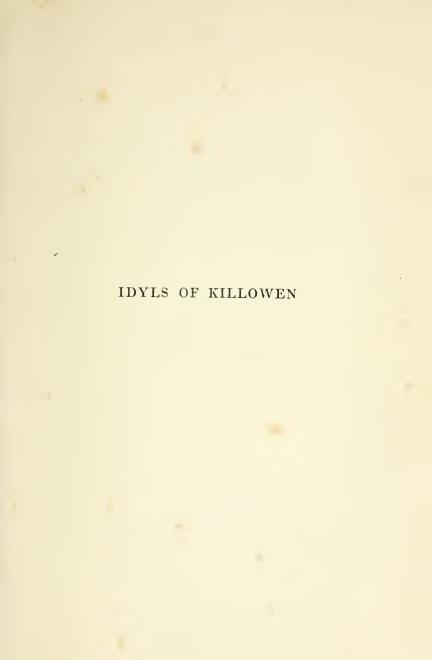




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IDYLS OF KILLOWEN

A Soggarth's Secular Verses

BY THE

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JAMES BOWDEN

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PREFACE

Of the rich old language which many earnest men and women are trying now to revive or keep alive in Ireland, the two phrases that are most familiar to outsiders are Soggarth Aroon and Cead mile failte—'Priest dear,' and 'A hundred thousand welcomes.' The first of these explains the sub-title of my book; may the other be an omen of the reception that awaits it!

The verses are called Killowen Idyls because many of them are concerned about rustic themes and scenes, and were inspired by recollections of early years spent in Killowen, a country district in County Down, stretching along the northern shore of Carlingford Lough, between Rostrevor and Mourne.

A companion volume—Vespers and Compline:
the Sacred Verses of a Lifetime—will contain the

rest of the rhymes which I have written since those old Killowen days, and which have already had considerable circulation in various forms.

The word 'Idyl' occurs so often in the following pages that it seems well to defend that way of spelling it. Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, imitated by the titles of some other books, has accustomed the eye to double *l*; but surely the analogy of 'label' from *labellum*, 'libel' from *libellus*, 'metal' from *metallum*, and 'pupil' from *pupillus*, should make us content with a single *l* in 'idyl' from *idyllium*.

I will venture—not in the prominent way in which dedications are usually set forth, but without leave, with many misgivings, and as it were by stealth—I will venture to inscribe these Killowen Idyls to Lord Russell of Killowen, whose public life is before the world, and who in all the relations of private life—as son, brother, husband, father, and friend—has always been faithful, generous, and true-hearted.

M. R.

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THE IRISH FARMER'S SUNDAY MORNING

Through breast of eareworn mortal rarely darts
More keen delight than honest peasant knows
When out of slumbers long and deep he starts,
And thinks 'its Sunday!' and his fancy goes
Sporting amid the restful hours, and shows
His one whole day for ease and chatting friends,
Himself refulgent in his Sunday clothes;
While a vague sadness with his rapture blends—
The Sunday's come; but soon, too soon, the Sunday
ends!

To-day no need to start at chilly dawn,
Or drudge the misty, hungry morning through.
Sleep, honest soul! you're weary still—sleep on,
Since God ordains, less for Himself than you,
That man shall 'neath this sun no labour do.
And yet, betimes, into the moist, raw air,
Some needful Sunday duties to pursue,
Noiseless he sallies forth with tiptoe care,
Lest his stout tramp disturb the dear ones sleeping
there.

The mother slumbers on: for she had toiled
Till it was almost Sunday, striving hard
That in her children's garb should nothing soiled
Or torn appear. Vain effort! rudely marred
Ere half the day be done, though pious ward
Is by the elder sister kept o'er all—
So matronly and of so grave regard.
Ah! many a bramble, many a leap and fall,
Await those Sunday clothes now hanging on the
wall!

The breakfast ready, what a welcome beams
On every well-washed face, that looks its best,
While from the brownest crockery up steams
That beverage which of its magic zest
The disenchanter Use can ne'er divest;
But here, reserved for feasts and Sunday morns,
It comes a ten-times honoured, welcome guest.
Simple their fare beside: yet whoso scorns
Knows not how rich the board that hale content
adorns.

Before the sire an egg, one only, lies, Laid by as good a duck as ever swam;¹ Whereof the top, removed 'neath wistful eyes,

¹ Duck's eggs commend themselves more to the rustic palate than eggs of milder flavour.

Regales his little pet, his youngest lamb—
Her with the flaxen curls and eyes so calm.
Before the sire the loaf-bread, too, is laid
To be dispensed in slices thin, like ham:
For it, alas! the hard-earned pence were paid;
The gulf still left is filled with coarser sort, homemade.

Now clattering cups and crunching teeth give o'er,
And all consent to sign a truce at last;
Albeit Tom thinks he could do something
more,

And Bess and Mary at the teapot cast
Glances not quite indifferent. But fast
All hurry off, their toilets to complete;
For easy undress graced their brisk repast.
Had they sat down elaborately neat,
Their work had been performed less freely and less
fleet.

Then was there brushing in hot haste; the vest, Tight-fitting jacket, pants of royal cord Are burnished up with zeal that knows no rest Till industry has met its due reward:

For when did frameless looking-glass afford

¹ As contra-distinguished from griddle-bread.

Glimpse of more brilliantly apparelled boy?

Ah, may no rent or accident untoward

His elegant placidity alloy,

Enshrined in stoutest frieze and roughest corduroy.

With face washed spotless—ah, laborious task!—And chin close-shorn blocked up in starchèd snow,

The 'good-man' of the house his boys doth ask
If they at last are ready. 'Come, let's go:
No time to lose'—though well the rogue doth
know

They really have ample time to spare.

The lads, however, no reluctance show—

An hour too soon is neither here nor there,

While folk have tongues to wag and eyes to wink

and stare.

Meanwhile the eldest sister scrubs amain
With tender roughness at the younger fry,
Achieving cleanliness with trifling pain
When soap invades the incautious half-closed eye.
May God be blessed, with all my soul I cry,
For giving elder sisters! Who as they
Can soothe and chide us, guard and purify,
Discreetly scold, and then, good-humoured play,
Mother and sister both, so grave and yet so gay?

At length the mother issues forth arrayed
In all her splendour—for the sun shines bright—
Grumbling benignly that she is delayed
By her two youngest, not yet wholly 'right.'
But now they beam before her, and delight
The mother's heart with prettiness sedate.
Off hand in hand they set, a touching sight;
While she, half angry, cries, as clinks the gate,
'Mind,'tis the curate's day—I'll lay my life you're
late.'

Ah! ma'am, take care lest thou thyself to-day
Be later still: for lo! before thee there
Two of thy cronies loiter by the way.
Come, hasten on, their converse sweet to share,
First having marked what sort of gown they wear.
And then the three discourse of auld lang syne,
The hardships which e'en thirty housewives bear—
The measles' ravages 'midst babes and swine,
The price of tea, the health of horses, husbands, kine.

The hedgerows green now bursting out in song—
The fields that glow with blossomed stalks or
corn—

The sights, sounds, scents, the summer air that throng—

All voiceless cry, 'This, this is Sunday morn!'

Oh, on this day of graces do not scorn
Your neighbour yonder with the shabby cloak,
Whose little girl's best frock is patched and
worn—

Once rich as you, till pestilential stroke
Smote three fine cows; and then the husband's
spirit broke.

Our honest friend thus chats away, and eyes
The groups that pass. But who's that maiden tall
Shining in muslin of the gayest dyes?
'Why, that's my Mary, bravest of them all!'
Then doth she with meek pride her daughter eall,
On whose young cheek an artless blush is raised—
Oh, may no darker shadow ever fall!
Pure soul, the love wherewith the angels gazed
Upon her then shall last for ever, God be praised!

Thicker the pilgrim bands now throng the road; And see, it peers from out you clump of trees, The whitewashed chapel. Ah! too mean abode To lodge the King of Ages, who yet sees More 'neath that lowly roof His heart to please Than greets His eye in vast cathedral fane. From pomp and pride the Lord of Glory flees, Whilst 'midst the simple-hearted, poor and plain, With a peculiar joy His spirit doth remain.

THE IRISH FARMER'S SUNDAY MORNING 7

Around the churchyard-gate a buzzing crowd.

Wouldst learn the theme that stirreth every tongue?

It is the question roared so oft aloud,
Whispered so oft men's eager throngs among,
As if the noblest ever said or sung—
O'er which in every rank and clime men gloat—
Which on men's lips for ages must have hung
Ere spake Demosthenes,¹ ere Horaee wrote:
'Tell me, I prithee tell, the newest thing afloat!'

The reverend patriarchs, throned on yonder wall,
With ardour keen their last debate renew
Upon the great world's politics, and all
The current wars and markets: though 'tis true
Their facts are stale, apocryphal, and few,
Their judgments wrong, predictions false no
doubt;

And, like to councils of more weight which you And I could name, they'd make more modest rout, Knew they a little more of what they talk about.

Where are the boys? My muse is grieved to tell That some are 'pitching buttons' at their ease, Screened by the alders round a neighbouring well; While others these expectant moments seize

¹ Βαὐλεσθε. . . . πυνθάνεσθαι κατά τήν ἄγοραν, λέγεται τὶ καινὸν; Demosthenes, I. Philip. circa init.

To hurl the 'shoulder stone.' More staid than these,

A few aspire to join the gaping crowd
Who listen while, with mystic cough and sneeze,
The 'Master' reads, bespectacled, aloud
A journal five days old, with whine screnely proud.

Nor deem that all the parish in the sun
Their Sunday legs are idly dangling here.
The women all, and all the males who've won
Repute of sanctity, and those who fear
The threatening rain, their course directly steer
To where the drone of this most saintly hive,
A learned tailor, chants forth bold and clear
The rosary-prayers, while ancient matrons strive
With zealous haste for one shrill decade of the
five.

What bodes that lull among the herd profane
Out in the grassy churchyard congregate?
At last the priest glides through the narrow lane
Of bowing heads with grave, paternal state.
The good old man hastes not, though very late,
But has his joke for some, his smile for all,
Heedless of those who long impatient wait
Round the small room behind the altar wall
Which serves as sacristy, parlour, confessional.

And now each seeks his place within the pile 'Mid the last warnings of yon tongue of brass, Which from aloft screams round o'er half a mile, 'The priest is here—O come, O come to Mass!' Those strains, I ween, in angel's thoughts surpass Viol and harp, and e'en in carnal ears Sound less discordant than that hymn, alas! Now bellowed forth as if each singer fears His part's unheard. But hush! the vested priest appears.

Before him strut two chubby surpliced boys:

One rings a bell with somewhat pompous skill,

If skilful ringing aim at making noise;

The other looks and listens, pleased but ill—

Well, never mind, when his turn comes, he will

Beat Tommy's ringing hollow. Then the pair

Kneel with crossed hands and eyes half-closed,

yet still,

While watching for *Amen*, they've time to spare For sidelong peeps to note their comrades' envious stare.

The Acts of sorrow, faith, hope, love are read; The Holy Water sheds its cleansing shower; All rise, and Mary's Angelus is said, And then begins the rite of mystic power. What portents crowd that quiet happy hour!
The tide of grace swells high in many a heart
Which of simplicity hath ample dower,
Lending it strength to bear the worrying smart
Of all the toils and cares that form a poor man's part.

The maid that hath with letters tinctured been Her prayer-book doth with holy face peruse, Conscious the while she prayeth not unseen— Well, let him watch her praying if he choose: Her lips move none the less for that. Ah! Suse, Are not you thinking how, ere months be flown, The parish may be startled by the news: 'You've heard the wedding?' 'That I long have known—

A decent boy, but not too good for Susie Sloan.'

Then, this distraction slowly thrust aside,
With graver piety her prayers she reads:
While some, less learned, survey take more
wide,

Consulting duly for the spirit's needs
By fingering audibly their huge black beads.
The good old crones close to the altar kneel
In glaring cotton or in sober weeds,
While rigorous sinks and motions quaint rope

While vigorous sighs and motions quaint reveal Not more devotion than their simple bosoms feel.

Beseems it not in such rude, playful strain, To dare aught more than meekly bow the head In hush of soul as chimes that bell again To tell the sacrifice is midway sped. He who will judge the living and the dead Steals hither now in less terrific form As if His low-born love disguised to wed, Nor yet unloved, unworshipped. Hark! the storm 1

Of stifled sighs that burst from hearts unstained and warm.

But now no more: though more, much more is said, And thought and done, the muse might not disown.

But ah! for me those pastoral days are fled, And 'mid the garish streets my lot is thrown. For fields and flowers and waves I trust alone To Memory, garrulous, half-welcome guest, That chatters gaily lest the door be shown. Call upon her and Fancy for the rest,

Or mark such scenes yet found in Erin, poor but blest.

^{1 &#}x27;The long wave yearns along the coast With sob suppressed, like that which thrills (While o'er the altar mounts the Host) Some chapel on the Irish hills.' AUBREY DE VERE.

O Erin! O my mother! fondest child
Of our own Mother, Queen of earth and heaven—
Truest to her, who, while on earth exiled,
Has been to us as nursing mother given.
May ne'er thy chain of Roman faith be riven!
And from her throne celestial may our Queen,
On one sweet morn out of each weary seven,
Gaze down with joy on many a holy scene
Like that I've sung with more of truth than skill,
I ween.

A PICNIC AT ROSTREVOR

IT lies 'twixt the sea and the mountain, Or rather the bay and the hill, Which cool the warm breath of the summer, And take from the winter its chill. It nestles 'mid oak-trees and beeches That stretch their green arms o'er the street, Whose breadth, to its length nearly equal, Expands where the four roadways meet. As you wind by the bay's breezy margin, Rostrevor you mark from afar, Betrayed by its spire of Our Lady's, And joyful you cry: 'Here we are!'-Betraved by its spire gleaming brightly High o'er its embowering trees: As the breath of the sea is detected In this bracing and life-giving breeze. That white granite spire of Our Lady's On the oaks and the beeches looks down, And it cries up to heaven for a blessing On the simple Arcadian town.

A blessing in sooth is the convent That hides in the shadow serene Of that beautiful Church of our Lady, Of Mary our Mother and Queen.

The convent and church crown the village Which clusters in peace at their feet; A stream from the hills saunters past it, Reluctant to leave scene so sweet. Dark stream where the branches hang thickly, Bright stream where the sun pierces through; 'Tis shallow, yet keeps a broad channel-Who knows what the winter may do? A bridge takes you over this river Which dreamily murmurs along, Too lazy to wet all its pebbles, Too lazy for ripple or song. You then, 'neath the long, leafy branches Interlacing o'erhead, wend your way, Near plashing of waves on the shingle, Towards the mouth of the mountain-locked bay. And soon on your left you will notice The Woodside Hotel at the quay-(This rhyme is pronounced as if rhyming With not very distant Crock Shee,1

¹ Phonetic spelling for Croagh Sidhe, the Fairies' Mountain.

Though personal taste would incline me To go for a rhyme to Mill Bay; But Walker and Worcester and Webster Conspire to point t'other way.)

Further on, the road glides through a forest
Which covers the mountain's steep side—
Green leaves all around you, above you,
Down, down to the brink of the tide.
And here, where the Wood House lies hidden,

A path tempts you up through the trees—
But first let me risk a suggestion
You're free to reject if you please.
This climbing of mountains is pleasant
For lads loose from schoolroom and desk;
But a well-furnished hamper enhances
The beauty of scenes picturesque.
Without a fat hamper ascend not!
We're made of both body and soul;
Ev'n poets can't do without dinner,
And maybe 'tis best on the whole.
So take turn about with the hamper,
And, crawling zigzag, scale the steep;
Puff, pant, and perspire towards the summit,
Disturbing the mountaineer sheep.

These, wiry and hardy and agile,
Climb mountains more deftly than you
Who frequently find it expedient
To pause and admire the view.

Come, rest in the shade of this boulder, Called truly in Irish Clough More,1 Once hurled o'er the lough by the giant Who fought from the southern shore. You see where the Carlingford giant Lies under you mountain ridge high-In outline his figure recumbent Is traced clear against the blue sky. Here, too, you observe how his fingers Sank deep in this wonderful stone-But now peradventure your hunger Sufficiently wolfish hath grown. Clough More shall behold a new battle; Here pitch we our camp for a halt. Be hampers unpacked! Where's the corkscrew? I fear we've forgotten the salt. With eating and laughing and quaffing, Uncounted the sunny hours pass, Where the bottles of many a picnic Are strewn o'er the crisp, trodden grass.

¹ Big stone.

Awaiting dessert, you have leisure

To bend your rapt gaze on the scene—
These parallel ranges of mountain,
The salt waves that sparkle between,
The white sails that speckle those waters,
The cornfields that speckle the side
Of you mountain, repulsing the heather
Far up from the marge of the tide.
Where the mountains slope downward and inland,

And melt in blue distance away,
The stout Frontier-town of old Newry
Keeps guard at the head of the bay.
God bless the good town and each homestead
That peoples this ocean-lake's shore,
All round from the Hill of the Violets
To the lighthouse that faces Greenore!

In yonder must lie Narrow Water,
Where smoke-wreaths from Warrenpoint town
Curl upward beyond this rich woodland
Of green, patched with yellow and brown.
How white winds the road down beneath us!
Ev'n dust at this distance looks nice!
'Tis well to commune thus with Nature—
(Oh! thank you, just give me one slice.)

At last we hie homeward. The journey
Down hill through the crags and the trees
(The freight of the hamper stowed elsewhere)
Is made with comparative ease.
How swift, how unheeded the swiftness
Of the last downhill stage of life's way!
How pleasant is home to the weary!
In heav'n may we feel it one day!

But ah! though the charms I have chanted Have dear to my memory grown, I think of thee more, O Rostrevor! Because thou art near to Killowen.

THE YARRA-YARRA UNVISITED

WRITTEN IN AN AUSTRALIAN ALBUM ON ITS HOME TOUR

Ne'er have I rambled on its marge,
Ne'er angled 'mid its willows;
I ne'er have sailed in skiff or barge
Upon its languid billows.
Yet will I sing—as Callanan
Once sang of Gougaune Barra—
Yet will I sing as best I can
The lazy, winding Yarra.

Ah! many a day of weary toil
And much privation well borne
Have served to tame the rampant soil
And raise this rising Melbourne.
Some sixty years ago a wild
As lonely as Sahara—
Now rife with life and trade's keen strife,
Just at the mouth of Yarra.

It creeps between high wooded sides,
And ere it reach the city
Past holy Abbotsford it glides—
To which it owes this ditty.
For in Australian album, why
Waste praise on Connemara?
Thy heart's in Abbotsford, and I
Will praise its Yarra-Yarra.

The friend whose friendship gave me thine,
With kindness past all telling,
Pursues me since the 'auld lang syne,'
When first with him I fell in.
Ah! while we watched the summer tide
Lap thy grey rocks, Kinvara,
We recked not that o'er oceans wide
He'd fly to Yarra-Yarra!

He tells me that the sky above
Is bluer far and brighter
Than that which spans the Isle we love;
The air is warmer, lighter.
Gay flowers along the margin float,
And many an avis rara,
Of brilliant plume but tuncless throat,
Skims o'er the sparkling Yarra.

When shall I breathe that purer air?

Quite lately I have had some

Fair chance of being summoned there—

If summoned, ecce adsum!

The motto of our Bedford race

Is this: Che sara sara.

(The accent slightly I misplace,

To coax a rhyme for Yarra.)

More musical than new Adare
Its olden name Athdara,
And Tennyson's meek Lady Clare
Grows statelier as Clara.
Had not my Muse such gems to spare
For gemming thy tiara,
She would not waste a double share
On this one stanza, Yarra.

There is not unity of theme,

I grant it, in these stanzas;

The subjects as far sundered seem

As Kensington and Kansas.

'Twere better if in graceful round

My thoughts could move—but arrah!

What can a poet do, who's bound

To close each verse with Yarra?

And notice here, our rhythmic chords
Are strict in orthodoxy,
Nor do they force two little words
For one to act as proxy.
An article to harshly treat
(As in this line) would mar a
Most conscientious rhyming feat
Achieved to honour Yarra.

But now, at last, we must give o'er
With our Wordsworthian 1 sapphic,
Though sundry rhymes remain in store,
Historic, topographic,
Like those we've hitherto impressed,
As Lara and Bokhara,
Carrara, Marat, and the rest;
But how link these with Yarra?

My trickling thread of metre wells
As if 'twould well for ever:
So mountain streamlet swells and swells
Into a stream, a river.

¹ See Wordsworth's 'Yarrow Unvisited,' 'Visited,' and 'Revisited.' The title of this poem and of some that follow was of course suggested by the first of this exquisite trio.

But now my harp as mute must grow As that which hangs at Tara. Farewell, dear maid from Bendigo! Farewell, O Yarra-Yarra!

THE ALLO UNVISITED

An Irishman, I love the fair
And fruitful land that bore me.
(O'Connell, you're no doubt aware,
Made this remark before me.¹)
I love dear Erin's vales and hills,
Her tillage land and fallow;
I love her rivers and her rills,
And thus I love the Allo.

Thus only; for I must avow
'Tis but by name I know it.

Its name has more than once ere now
Slid from the pen of poet.

The Laureate of the Fairy Queen
Erst tarried near Duhallow,

¹ In beginning his speech in the debate on the Repeal of the Union, in the Dublin Corporation, February 1843, in which his opponent was Alderman Isaac Butt:—'I am an Irishman, and I am an ardent admirer of the lovely and fruitful land of my birth, my fatherland.'

And oft he traced thy margin green, Broadwater, alias Allo!¹

In our own day, or near our day,
In Desmond the deep-valleyed,
Poor Callanan was wont to stray
On summer eves, and dallied
Along thy brink with poet-dreams
And legends sad that hallow
The windings of our Irish streams
And 'float down echoing Allo.'

Simmons of Blackwood here was 'raised'
(Loquendo yankicé) at Kilworth,
Whose poems, by Kit North o'erpraised,
A passing glance are still worth;
And Edward Walsh, not far away,
Sang his 'Mairgread ni Challa,'
But where his rustic schoolhouse lay,
In sooth I know not, Allo!

One poet more I'll link with thee.

More sweet than lark or mavis,

From manly heart sincere and free

Forth flowed the song of Davis.

¹ Spenser mentions it in 'Colin Clout's come home again,' line 123. I hope there is no need to quote Callanan's 'Gougaune Barra,' which the next stanza recalls. The Allo flows into the Blackwater near Kanturk.

Nor all at random do I name
The patriot bard of Mallow,
For in his boyhood oft he came
To muse along the Allo.

Thou swellest lovely Avondhu
(Now called, alas! Blackwater);
Her broader tide takes up anew
The chorus thou hast taught her.
Belov'd art thou of coot and crane,
Of willow and of sallow:
(The difference betwixt these twain
Is more than I know, Allo!)

But now enough I've named thy name,
Enough I've sung my saga;
And shrined for ever is thy fame
Within the leaves of Maga.
Hatched is my tiny brood of rhymes,
Which are, I grant, but callow:
Perchance their wings will grow betimes
And waft me to thee, Allo.

Farewell until we meet. If e'er
My pilgrim-steps should ramble
To where Kilcolman's crumbling stair ¹
Grows green with weed and bramble,

¹ Edmund Spenser lived at Kilcolman Castle.

No stranger shall I feel, and thou,
O limpid stream and shallow!
Wilt greet me as a friend. But now
Farewell, my winsome Allo!

DOWN BY THE DODDER

NATURE I love in all her moods, But I more oft have sought her Where on the silence of green woods Breaks in the rush of water. The noise of streamlet's ceaseless flow Has soothed my spirit ever-Blank seems fair Nature's fairest show Without some gleaming river.

Had I to own a grand estate— (The notion makes me shiver)— For these three things I'd stipulate: A lake, a hill, a river. Your dull, flat, woody parks may be Baronialler and broader-A glen for me 'twixt hills and sea, With a live stream like Dodder.

Too long have I thy neighbour been, Dear Stream, without exploring Thy course amid the meadows green, Thy purling and thy roaring:

For thou, too, placid Stream, hast roared,
While in wild wintry weather
Thou hast thy mountain torrent poured
Between the crags and heather.

Thy mountain cradle's far away,
Thy race is run; and mine is
Nearer perhaps—ah! who can say
How near?—unto its finis.
And so from Life's loud, dusty road,
A somewhat jaded plodder,
I steal to this serene abode,
And thee, suburban Dodder.

I lean me on this orchard wall
And sniff the pears and cherries—
Each shrub and tree, both great and small,
Stoops 'neath its load of berries.
That redbreast thieving yonder, see!
Poor innocent marauder,
The seventh commandment binds not thee
A-robbin' near the Dodder.

And now our seaward ramble meets
A rustic, quaint, and still town,
Which you must spell with double *l*—
God bless it, dear old Milltown!

Yet here, even here, one likes to dine:
Rich scenery's poor fodder
For poet going up the Rhine,
Or going down the Dodder.

My song must cease, but thine goes on;
Thy musical, meek murmur
Broke Nature's silence ages gone—
Thy voice has but grown firmer.
In shade and shine, grave, gay, sing on,
And scoop thy channel broader;
From dawn to dark, from dark to dawn,
Flow on, sing on, O Dodder!

Flow on! Poor Moore once warbled here
'Flow on, thou shining river!'
Thy race is run, the sea is near,
My muse grows sad—forgive her.
And as we've strewn upon thy banks
Our very softest sawder,
Flash back thy sunniest smile in thanks
Upon thy Laureate, Dodder!

I leave thee. Shall it be for aye,
Λ river's long For ever?
'I will return,' we often say,
And yet return, ah! never.

Well, on Life's road, through dust and flowers,
A not less useful plodder
I'll be, please God, for these calm hours
Spent on the banks of Dodder.

THE LIFFEY UNSUNG

Since first the trick of rhyme I tried,
I've sung full many a river.
Whene'er I see bright waters glide,
I bless the Almighty Giver
Who bade them flow; and long ago
(What's this aetatem supplet?)
In boyish days I to their praise
Would cobble many a couplet.

The Yarra through far Melbourne flows,
Through Donnybrook the Dodder—
These, far apart, have touched my heart,
And (what is even odder)
A Munster river quite unknown,
And one that rhymes with 'polka,'
Dear to my wayward Muse has grown—
The Allo and the Tolka.

The dearest last of all I sang—
Glanrye that flows through Newry.
The spot where first my life-stream sprang
Such tribute claimed de jure.

Yet on its banks I do not dwell;
Not far but long I've wandered,
How many years I dare not tell—
Please God, not wholly squandered.

My home is where the Liffey strays
Through Erin's queenly city—
Not here, as in its rural days,
Pellucid, pure, and pretty.
But, ere at last its windings end
In yon salt tide before it,
Grattan, O'Connell, Butt extend
Their ample arches o'er it.

What memories of the bygone cling
Where Liffey's wavelets glisten!
What ballads all its stream might sing,
Were we but skilled to listen!
Then, why no rhyme through all this time?
I'll tell you in a jiffey:
That low word is the only rhyme
That pairs with Anna Liffey.

TO THE GLANRYE

WHICH FLOWS THROUGH NEWRY INTO CARLINGFORD BAY

Ir I had known your name, fair Stream!
When this worn heart was young,
When life seemed still a happy dream,
You had not lurked unsung;
But only after many a year
Of exile has gone by,
Far from your grassy banks, I hear
Your name, O dear Glanrye!

Still dear, though centuries seem fled
Since that warm summer day
When last, an eager boy, I sped
Along your marge to play,
Out by the Downshire road, before
You reach the dusty streets
Where, all your rural rambles o'er,
The tide your current meets.

They say your lakelet cradle lies

Near steep Rathfriland town,

Though some urge stoutly that you rise

More Mourneward, oozing down

From Ballyvally's hilly ridge—

In proof of which proud claim

The stream that passes Mayo Bridge

Already bears your name.

When both those streams have joined in you,
Be your source where it may,
Your goal would almost seem in view—
You mountain-girdled bay.
But no, not yet. Full many a grace
To grain and beast and man
Glanrye must bring, before its race
Shall have fulfilled God's plan.

Back from the Bay you westward wind,
And, as your eddies pass,
They leave God's benison behind,
Air purer, greener grass.
Then south you turn to that fair town
Where first the light I saw,
Where meet Armagh and Louth and Down—
The ancient Yewrkintraw.

¹ This is the sound of Newry's old name, Iubhar-keann-tragh, 'The Yew-trees at the head of the Strand.'

Glanrye, God bless you, and each stone
You wash upon your way!
God bless Rostrevor and Killowen
Far down the noble Bay!
Some friends have o'er the ocean sped,
Some in the graveyard lie:
God bless the living and the dead!
God bless you, old Glanyre!

THE IRISH CHILDREN'S FIRST COMMUNION

IN THREE PARTS

PART L-THE CATECHISM CLASS

My story wafts me—if so slight a thing
Be deemed a story—backward many years;
I dread to count them, for on viewless wing
Fast fleeteth from me with its hopes and fears
Life's week of work-days, and the Sabbath
nears,

Silent and swift. Far back and far apart
From present duties fond remembrance peers,
While scenes, long vanished, into being start
From bygone summer-times of year and life and
heart.

How sweet the mem'ry of those summer days,
Whose sun shone brighter far than sun shines
now,

When down the steep and rugged mountain-ways
Sped many a peasant-child whose sunburnt
brow

Told of long watches shared with sheep and cow,

Out on the brae, in fair or blustering weather.

But now released they come with merry row
Of shouts and laughter, skipping o'er the heather,
The girls linked arm-in-arm, the boys in bands
together.

So many helping hands can parents spare?

They're bidden to the catechism class,
And all the parish youngsters must be there.

For though on ev'ry Sunday, after Mass,
The children who are old enough to 'pass'
Are dinned with Christian doctrine, yet 'tis found

Most of their giddy little heads, alas!
Imbibe it slowly, and the priest feels bound
To stretch the Sunday-school at times the whole
week round.

When winter days have lengthened into spring,
And spring's chill rains have ceased to pour
amain,

When larks begin to make the welkin ring—
Then down the hillside and across the plain,
Noisy and blithesome, winds the swelling train

Of children, to the chapel hieing fast.

No tight-laced boot or boddice causeth pain:

Such cramping fashions to the winds they cast—
Barefoot and free they speed, and reach their goal

at last.

For on last Sunday, when 'the Book was changed'
The second time, arose the mild uproar
Of women, who with careful hand arranged
Their Sunday gowns behind them and before,
Half kneeling and half sitting on the floor;
While on their side the men, in frieze bedight,
Relieved their wearied ankles less or more,
Not standing, sitting, nor yet kneeling quite,
But lolling on left knee, with elbow on the right.

Yet soon they stood; and when the stir had ceased,

And gallery grandees their seats had ta'en—
After some moments' solemn pause, the priest
Turned to instruct his simple flock with plain
And earnest words, whereof they best retain
This final warning: 'Come, my children dear,
Work at your catechism might and main,
For some of you are backward still, I fear,
And now within a month the Bishop will be here.'

Then with a father's mild authority,

Strong in his priestly power and love, he spake;

Knowing full well his people would but be
Happy and proud such sacrifice to make
For holy faith and for their children's sake.
And so poor mothers, till the month be o'er,
Must the routine of household duties break,
That their 'wee girleens' may be free to store
Within their innocent minds a hoard of Christian lore.

Thus through the bygone week the children came,

Not (as in towns) from streets and lanes hard by, But most from distant homes; and who could blame

Those entering late? Yet doth the wise priest try

To frown a little, as, demure and sly,

The truants fain by stealth would reach their place.

How swift the eager, crowded moments fly,
As rival classes through their chapters race—
Till lo! again 'tis come, the day of rest and
grace.

No day of rest for First Communion class!

The priest his tardy breakfast speeds, to come
To the young swarm that tarries after Mass.

Hushed at his coming is the busy hum
Of question and reply, and all grow dumb
While Father John repeats his explanation
(Not yet half frequently enough for some)
Of what each one must do in preparation
For First Communion these, and those for Confirmation.

Deftly he then examines lads and lasses,
Mingling judicious praise with kind reproof,
Transfixing culprits through his silver 'glasses'—
But hark! the clink-clink of a horse's hoof.
A frieze coat hurries in, yet stands aloof
Till asks the priest what may his business be.
Death is a visitor beneath his roof!
'Tis a sick-call away behind Croagh Shee—
Thither the pastor hastes, the children breathe more free.

Then swells anew the catechism clatter—
'How many Gods are there?' and 'What is sin?'
For the poor teachers' tis no easy matter
Within fair limits to control the din,

Especially when 'ups and downs' begin.¹
But when the tumult soars beyond due bounds,
The 'Master' takes his cane, ne'er used within
These hallowed walls—and yet the eager sounds
Calm down, as, cane in hand, he sternly goes his
rounds.

Among the boys a mighty monarch, he
Doth all the week hold undivided sway
Within the sultry schoolhouse which you see
Out yonder near the churchyard gate. To-day
A gentler sovereign, easier to obey,
Rules meekly 'mid the girls: 'tis Miss O'Neill
From Hawthorn Nook, a mile along the bay,
Who tries to make her three young charges feel
For this most holy task some of her own bright
zeal.

For these the hours of class seem all too brief,
But to their pupils tardy sounds the bell
Which brings tired head and restless limb relief,
Gathering them round the altar-rails to swell

¹ Is a note needed here? 'Let us have ups and downs!' was a common cry of the children when I was one of them—namely, 'Let us change our places according as we answer right or wrong, so that the good ones may reach the head of the class and the others gravitate towards the bottom.'

The chorus of Hail Marys. Then pell-mell
The urchins scramble for their caps, and press,
With that rude crushing schoolboys love so well,
Out to the road. The girls depart with less
Of disregard for peace, propriety, and dress.

Then what a merry progress homeward! Some Proceed but intermittently, delaying Betimes with this or that familiar chum, At pitch-and-toss, or tig, or marbles playing, So long that motherkind at home are saying: 'What can be keeping Billy there this late?' William, meanwhile, his chances sagely weighing,

Decides that though the charm of 'mebs' be great, For dinner cold or scant it scarce will compensate.

The Sunday dinner! Epicures, in vain

My muse to you would picture what that means

For those whose week-day fare is passing plain,

At best a herring; but to-day brown beans

Steam round their bit of bacon, with young

greens

Or cauliflower to enhance the zest
Of what to hungry health is worth tureens
Of turtle to the rich—potatoes dressed
In native jackets all, smiling their very best.

This is the bait which wileth Billy home
E'en from that fascinating pitch-and-toss.
Lured by this prospect, he will scorn to roam
After the brightest butterflies that cross
His homeward pathway. Without further loss
Of time he hast'neth in with cheeks aglow,
And doth his cap upon the dresser toss;
Whilst mother mildly grumbles, 'Home so slow!
The Catechism class was over long ago.'

PART II.—ANNIE

Thus, months beforehand, twice at least a week,
And, as the end drew nearer, twice a day,
Did these dear, simple Irish children seek
That whitewashed chapel 'twixt the hills and
bay,

Turning their holy taskwork into play,
Yet learning well Faith's verities sublime.
God bless and guard them! Heaven's for
such as they.

May all reach safe in turn that brighter clime—Heirs of eternity, though children frail of time.

The boys flock down in noisy bands; the girls

More slowly but more steadily proceed.

That modesty and all heaven's purest pearls

Their souls adorn, on each bright face you read,

As on Her face who o'er the hills with speed Went to the Baptist's mother. May they ne'er Darken their souls with evil thought or deed, Kept pure by poverty and work and prayer, And by that Food Divine for which they now prepare!

Among these little girls came three at first With their kind governess from Hawthorn Nook:

But one of these three sisters, fondly nursed, Caressed and cherished, seemed unfit brook

Life's gentlest gales. The pretty blush forsook Her cheek, her tiny hands yet whiter grew: Then was she left at home with some good book.

Or set some easy fireside task to do: She was the youngest child-youngest and dearest too.

And here a curious fancy crosses me Which Muse less homely would austerely smother-

Something that I have sometimes seemed to see About the namesakes of our Lady's mother,

(More numerous than those of any other
Except our Lady's own). If arch and canny
And prone to play one sly trick or another—
If wild and frolicsome, their name is Nannie:
If gentle, meek, and fair, we soften it to Annie.

And such was Annie Desmond. Fair and bright,
Alas! too bright and fair to cheer us long—
Hers the sad brightness of a starry night:
'Twas easy seeing Annie was not strong,
That pink tinge showed that something must be wrong.

'Nay, Annies always die,' I heard one say;
And I indeed 'mid the celestial throng
Know some dear angels of that name, and they
In their fresh dewy morn did heavenward steal away.

Why should they not? How good soe'er and dear,
We must not grudge them to God's loving care.
Lord! it is well for us to serve Thee here,
But better, safer to be with Thee there—
In Thy blest home which she must surely share,
Who gracefully the cross did late resign
That Thou hadst willed her long and well to bear.

May light perpetual upon her shine,

And may her faith and hope, in life, in death, be
mine!

Our Annie's place in heaven is ready now;
The angels call her, and she must not stay.
God lays His hand upon her innocent brow
And draws her to His loving heart for aye—
One cloudless morning is her life's brief day.
She to her nest on high her flight will take,
And, as on dovelet's wing, soar far away.
So the good priest the sad news tries to break:
She on her deathbed must her First Communion
make.

For though a catechism class she taught,
She, too, was but preparing for the Feast
Of First Communion when the death-blight
caught

Her delicate frame, and all her labours ceased.
Her pupils (youngest she herself and least)
Are now another's; but each day they steal
To ask for 'poor Miss Annie,' and the priest
Bids them all pray for her each time they kneel,
And then her little friends look graver than they
feel.

Annie must die. But, though Death held her fast,
His grasp relaxed a little, and she tried
To gain as much of vigour as might last
Till, with her mother watching by her side,

She crept, pale as her snow-white frock, to hide

Hard by the altar rails. There, bending low,
She prayed that Jesus as His little bride
Would make her, too, that holy rapture know
Whereof Imelda ¹ died so sweetly long ago.

Angels unseen play with her round about
Until He comes to hush her longing sighs,
The Lord of angels; and the joy shines out
On her pale face and through her meek bright
eyes.

Unheard on earth, her grateful hymns arise
Up to the Throne, and showers of grace descend
Where 'mid the lilies the Beloved lies.
Soon, soon that Lord His messenger will send
To bid her to His Feast whose joy shall never

Then, tired and happy, to her little bed
Home she is borne, till Jesus comes once more
For the last time, to give her strength to tread
The perilous road we all must travel o'er,

¹ Blessed Imelda Lambertini died at Bologna in the rapture of her miraculous First Communion, on Easter Sunday, in the year 1333.

From life to judgment. With her little store
Of merits gained, her trivial debts to pay,
She goes to Him who calls her. Evermore
All bright and pure in heaven's unfading May,
Her glad eternity one First Communion Day.

And so another angel sings in heaven;
Another hillock rises 'mid the grass
Of old Kilbroney, where on summer even,
Or on fine Sundays after latest Mass,
Poor Annie's mother and her sisters pass
A cheerful hour in loving talk and prayer.
But she is safe: not so are these, alas!
Who Life's stern, glorious perils still must
dare—
May they the fullest grace of First Communion

May they the fullest grace of First Communion share!

PART III.—THE GREAT DAY

A week, one brief week only, and the day
Of First Communion shall have dawned. Dear
child!

Thy Saviour cometh. Oh! prepare the way:
He only wants a pure heart undefiled.

Banish from thine each thought untoward and wild,

And grow more like to Him this heavenly Guest,

More holy, and more humble, and more mild.

So will He come with joy into thy breast,

Lavish His treasures there, and sweetly take His rest.

Another week! But much is still to do—
In turn the children at the good priest's side
Must kneel to purify their souls anew
In that all-cleansing, sanctifying tide
Which from the Sacred Heart flows far and wide.

No heart is pure enough for this great feast,
Yet Christ would share it with us ere He died,
And His Heart's yearnings never since have
ceased;

And now He comes to these, His dearest though
His least.

There are rich, vivid moments in life's day—
Chiefly to young and guileless spirits given—
Keen, exquisite joy that will not, must not stay,
For this is earth around us, and not heaven.

This fullest rapture, without taint or leaven
Of sin or sadness, can be felt by none
More perfectly than by the child that, shriven
From its least trace of evil, thought or done,
Sees in clear morning sky the First Communion
sun.

The sun shines brightly out, as if it knew
How many hearts are glad to see it shine;
For all the dresses white and ribbons blue
Borrow a brighter glow, O sun! from thine.
Whole months of sunshine would these maids
resign

(What matters hay-crop or the ripening corn?)

To be secured until this day's decline

From drenching downpour and from mist for-

All sunshine bright as now, this First Communion morn.

Yes, till the day's decline; for not till then

These snowy garments shall be doffed. In
bands,

Through lanes and hamlets, and then home again,

They'll shyly march, with interwoven hands,

Less gay but happier than their wont. Thy sands,

O Time! should glide less rapidly to-day.

But now 'tis early morning, yet there stands

A little knot at stages on the way,

Eager to shine among the churchward-bound array.

Thus the procession gathers on its course,
And in fair order gains the chapel-gate,
Where Father John with pride reviews his force,
Chiding the few who even now come late
(As come they will, how long soe'er you wait).
Then to its proper place each class proceeds,
And each one tries, although the strain is great,
Not to look round, but kneeling prays or reads—
The prayer of such as these the great God hears
and heeds.

And now the belfry's hushed. A final thrill
Of deeper expectation; for at last
The vestry-door opes wide and wider still:
In red and white the servers flutter fast,
Each to his post, with tapers tall which east
A dull glare 'mid the sunshine. Then all stand
Until the mitred Sire hath slowly passed,
Bearing his crozier in his trembling hand—
A fatherly old man, austere, yet kind and bland.

The children think that bishops must perforce
Have snowy heads like this which lowly bends
In prayer at altar-foot. Meanwhile, of course,
Each little heart its private prayers suspends,
For see, the Bishop now the steps ascends
With Father John in surplice by his side,
Who slightly timorous himself pretends
The boys' manœuvres carelessly to guide,
And rubrical mistakes with quiet skill to hide.

The Mass begins. They kneel, and e'en the priest Kneels where he's wont to stand, and strikes his breast

At their Confiteor; and when they've ceased,
He speaks out slowly, solemnly the rest.
O First Communicants! pray, pray your best,
For time is passing, and the moment nears
For which so many prayers have been addressed—

So many longing sighs and heart-wrung tears—
Pray now with tears to Him who falling teardrop
hears.

The Gospel o'er, the servers seat them round
Upon the altar steps: the rest sit too,
And nought is heard save the impressive sound
Of many silent hearts. 'My children, you

Who are my joy and pride, my treasure true'—
So doth the Bishop his discourse begin
Which I in vain might strive to preach anew,
For (more than words) his looks, tones, gestures
win

Their way to innocent hearts undimmed by care or sin.

'Happy, my children, happy, happy ye!
The Lord is with you. He who said of old
"Suffer the little ones to come to Me,
The tender, snow-white lambkins of my
fold"—

He cometh now within your breasts to hold
Sweet converse, and His gracious gifts to shower.
Ah! not by man's tongue can the tale be told
Of all the works of grace and love and power
That He, the hidden God, works in Communion-hour.

'List to His prayer: "My child, give me thy heart!"

From this entreaty turn not cold away,
But beg Him of His bounty to impart
All gifts and graces of this blessed day,
And seal your hearts as all His own for aye.

So when the years, many or few, have fled,
Through which God willeth you on earth to
stay,

He who shall month by month your souls have fed

Will at the last come thus to bless your dying bed.

Oh! in the days or years 'twixt now and then May. God be with you all, my children dear! May you grow up good women and good men.

If God should spare you long to labour here, May you live happy in His love and fear!

Most precious earnest of that love is given

To you this morn. Pray! for the moment's near

For which to fit your spirits ye have striven—

He comes into your hearts whose smile is heaven of heaven.

'Pray then, my dear ones! Bow each heart and head

Before the awful Deity that deigns
To stoop so low our wretched souls to wed.
On high, in glory, love, and light He reigns;
Yet on our altars hidden He remains,

To come into our hearts. Your hearts to-day
Will first receive Him. Children, still take
pains

To welcome Him as sweetly as ye may;
Pray on, then, in your hearts; pray, dearest children, pray!'

The solemn rites proceed. The Sanctus bell
Is followed by the double chime that bends
Each head in worship. Wrong it were to tell,
In such rude rhyme, of Him who now descends
'Mid these His dearest and most cherished
friends—

The young, the poor, the simple. Let us pray
That these fresh hearts for ours may make
amends,

And that our icy chill may melt away

In these warm memories of First Communion Day!

COCK-CROW IN FRANCE

HARK to that voice! Methinks I recognise Accents familiar to these ears condemned So long to strain at half-guessed foreign sounds. Say, dost thou come from those far-distant isles-Far distant in sad verity to me, Though many a magic vapour-steed each day Achieves the journey over land and main? Art thou of Celtic or of Saxon race, That thus the feelings of thy soul find vent In language to my soul intelligible? No; but the birds and beasts of all the climes, Each several species to its idiom true, Concordant thus hold converse as they may. The robin, chirping on the grey tombstone Where rest my father's bones, might chant its hymn

Here by the banks of this most fair Mayenne, Nor need interpreter with Gallic robin. There is one dialect, but one, for all The robins of the universe. And thou, Thou, too, proud-crested bird, thy crow recalls That farmyard monitor whose matin chimes Would chide my sloth on summer morns of yore. Nay, such it was that thrice reproachful smote The tortured, wavering, noble heart of him Who, rushing from the gaze of those meek eyes, Wept bitterly.

Nor deem the Muse profane,
If, 'mid her play, such solemn thoughts intrude.
Not without solemn purpose she contrasts
The peaceful uniformity of all
The races of God's creatures animate;
All save their lord and master, him for whom
The one sole Lord and Master made them. Men,
With but a mound of earth, a stream between them,
Differ, like worlds apart, in thought and speech.
Not so the lower tribes that live and move;
For list! the cock-crow of this quaint French town
Re-echoes faithfully the chanticleer,
That flaps his wing and crows, perchance, this hour,
Before George Kielty's door in dear Killowen.

A BIRTHDAY IN RELIGION

I FEEL it hard, and very hard to hold—
The world grows wicked as the world grows old.
Through many a changeful year I've breathed its
air,

And found it ever genial, bracing, fair.
But, ah! my lot has been a special choice;
Not all can lift to heaven so glad a voice—
A gladsome voice, yet broken by sweet tears
Of grateful wonder at the happy years
My soul hath known. Not all are forced to
cry,

How strange, how strange that I, yea, such as I, Should be so fondly tracked from hour to hour, Unworthy trophy of God's pitying power!

For which of all the changes of my fate
But whispers of a love too good, too great

For any, says the only Great and Good?

For any, save the only Great and Good? Vainly my stubborn heart had long withstood The onset of those graces, till at last, Like impious Julian, when the fight was past, Writhing in death upon the Persian sod, The cry leaped forth, 'Oh! thou hast won, my God!' 1

Nor, 'mid the graces lavished on me, least I prize the providence which, soon as ceased The blessed bondage of the Novice, set Over the novice (novice then and yet)

A master, father, brother, friend so kind,²
So strong, so gentle, wise, unselfish—blind To others' faults, keen-sighted for his own—Duty by labours, not by precepts shown—That grave good-nature which so many bless, That wise facility in smiling Yes,
Able betimes so kind a No to smile,
As doth refusal of its pang beguile.

Ah! timid Muse, despise thee as they may,
Thou yet enablest this mute heart to say
Things that would sound more tasteless still in
prose.

My birthday thanks might glibly, had I chose, Have trickled out amid the fruit and wine— Such 'acts of hope' were never in my line,

¹ Vicisti, Galilæe!

² Father Edward Kelly, S.J.

Unless to turn an artless rhyme or two
When some rare courtesy has pierced me through.
For who but you could think to deck more gay
Our board in homage to my natal day?
Not one of all the twenty-five hath e'er
Been graced with such observance anywhere:
E'en in those early days which slid away
Close on the marge of our dear northern bay,
Nor yet, when under Neilsbrook's summer shade
'On Lough Neagh's bank,' the freed collegian
strayed,

While groups of laughing angels gambolled round, Than whom none kinder out of heaven are found.

Than whom none kinder? Kinder still are here, Friends still more patient, surer, more sincere: For here are ties which Death but faster binds; Hearts more devoted still, and richer minds. Thus he, with father, brother, friend, who parts, A hundredfold of helping hands and hearts In this life wins, and in the next, oh! what? Yet (God forgive me if He blames the thought) I own I cannot vehemently sigh To go and spend my next birthday on high. At six or sixty, not midway between, But better fall full ripe than plucked off green.

For 'tis our hope and prayer that each fresh year
That God may let us live and labour here,
May each pass quietly and each improve
Our lot eternal in the home above.
Well, short or long, we must not dare to ask,
But do our best at each day's petty task;
To us the gain, to God the praise be given,
And may each birthday find our souls more ripe
for heaven.

THE POOR MAN'S KNOCK

'Tis many a year, a score and more,
Since a little boy in blue frock
Would run to open the great hall-door,
Whose latch he scarce could reach from the floor—
'It is only a poor man's knock.'

The harsh word 'beggar' was under ban
In that quaint old house by the sea;
And little Blue Frock's announcements ran:
''Tis a poor little girl—'tis a poor blind man—
Poor woman with children three.'

And when our little boy would say,
'There's a poor person at the door,'
The sister who carried the keys that day
From a willing mother leave would pray
To give to him of her store.

But the little boy, ah! not always

Thus back to the parlour ran.

Often he hushed the whisper of grace,

And only said, with kind voice and face,

'There's nothing for you, poor man.'

'Well, dear, God bless you all the same!'
Thus meekly they would reply.
Ah! hard little heart, what a pity and shame
To let the poor creatures go as they came—
Bid them wait till again you try.

Long years have fled. All changed his lot
Since that era of belt and frock;
Yet oft from the Judge doth he hear in thought—
'I was hungry, and you—you gave me nought
When you answered the poor man's knock.'

And therefore he'd teach this rhyme, if he could,

To each little boy in blue frock:

'If you wish to be happy, try to be good,

And think that our Saviour asks you for food

When you ope to the poor man's knock.'

TO C. W. R.

ON FIRST READING A CERTAIN PAGE ¹ OF CARDINAL NEWMAN'S 'APOLOGIA'

Again betrayed! Another of thy deeds,
Performed by stealth to help a brother's needs,
Divulged by happy accident at last.
Not listlessly thy tranquil years have passed,
But with a placid energy to dare
All that thy well-trained strength could do—
whate'er

1 'My dear friend, Dr. Russell, the president of Maynooth, had perhaps more to do with my conversion than any one else. He called upon me in passing through Oxford in the summer of 1841. . . . I do not recollect that he said a word on the subject of religion. He sent me at different times several letters; he was always gentle, mild, unobtrusive, uncontroversial. He let me alone.'

In the original edition of the Apologia pro Vita Sua these words are found at page 317, which corresponds with page 197 of the later form of that work called The History of my Religious Opinions. The passage is given also at page 52 of Characteristics of John Henry Newman. These lines were at once prompted by the delighted surprise which I felt in reading the foregoing passage, not having heard from Dr. Russell anything about his close connection with Cardinal Newman, either in our private conversations or in his class of ecclesiastical history, though I was a member of it while he treated of the Oxford movement.

Might serve God's glory in thy time and place. Yet keen thy glance that aim divine to trace In humblest fellow-creature's humblest good: Work for the toiler—for the hungry, food. If thou but learn where merit suffers need, Word of encouragement and generous deed Are sure to come. From learned toil or play To weep with those who weep thou turn'st away. And as the eye—yes, in our measure we Must Him resemble who hath deigned to be Our Father—as that eye, which guides the race Of star and comet over lonely space, Marks every flutter of the tiniest wren: So from plain Duty's pettiest task thy ken With earnest sympathy can range apart Through all that thrills or pains the world's great heart.

But God's own word that order has assigned Which guides us best in working for our kind: 'Chiefly for those at home, by faith and blood Thy kin,' 1 thou livest. Whatsoe'er of good Thou canst—or others, moved by thee—thou dost, Hast done, wilt do, through lengthened years, I trust, For this dear land, for holy Faith and Truth, And Her, till now unnamed in song—Maynooth.

^{1 &#}x27;Maximé domesticorum fidei,' Gal, vi. 10,

Maynooth, unhallowed yet by hoary hair, Mother of myriad souls! lo, by her care The faith of Peter and of Patrick sown In distant regions, fostered in her own. May true apostles, trained by her, each year Speed on their glorious mission far and near, To waft abroad, at home to guard from taint, The faith that made this land the martyr-saint Of Christian lands, the suffering Holy Isle Which greener from the stormy waves doth smile-To feed the love our Erin aye displayed For Jesus' Mother, that each Celtic maid May smile in virgin dignity and be What generous strangers have rejoiced to see In the poor homesteads of our scattered race— Rich in God's gifts of purity and grace. With these three names, names prized in heaven at least-

Maynooth, the Irish race, the Irish priest— Long with these names close linked shall be thy name,

And grateful blessings shall thy memory claim.

'Uncontroversial, unobtrusive, mild'—
Gentle, unselfish, simple as a child.
True cheerfulness from serious thought has birth,
Natures the gravest bend to gayest mirth.

Courtcous alike to menial and to peer,
Kindest of hearts to those who see thee near,
Though some might deem thee from afar austere.¹
My courage fails me when I fain would paint
A nineteenth-century gentlemanly saint.
True sanctity respects the where and when—
The saints of God are truly gentle men.
This purse-proud age, with its galvanic heat,
Votes many of God's wonders obsolete,
And from the noonday glare smiles back with
scorn

Coldly benignant, at the dewy morn
Of Christendom—if all this garish light
Be noon, indeed, and not mere gaslit night.
Yet God is still of His poor earth the Lord—
True progress with His law must still accord.

Stay! such grave fancies misbeseem my strain— I read the Oratorian's page again,

1 'Il n'y a que les personnes qui ont de la fermeté qui puissent avoir une véritable douceur. Celles qui paraissent douces n'ont d'ordinaire que de la faiblesse qui se convertit aisément en aigreur.' After Rochefoucauld let me cite Tennyson:—

'Such fine reserve and noble reticence,
Manners so kind but stately, such a grace
Of tenderest courtesy—that gentleness
Which, when it weds with manhood, makes a man.'

I have often applied to the subject of these lines this phrase from Tacitus: 'Neque illi (quod est rarissimum) aut facilitas auctoritatem aut severitas amorem diminuit.'

And marvel how in all those years no word
To such noteworthy incident referred,
Though oft the easy context of discourse
From lips least egotistical might force
Some tiny crumb of personal anecdote,
A 'Thus I heard him say,' or 'Once he wrote.'
And what high privilege, dear Friend, was
thine,

Guiding Faith's pilgrim to her one true shrine!

Pilgrim far-famed, in whom God deigned to

see

Fit instrument for work sublime—to be
For many in our day and through all days
Himself a guide from out the dreary maze
Of error and half-truth and crumbling creeds—
Himself a 'Note' for all whom candour leads.
Not such as he grope blindly in God's sight
From light to darkness, but from dark to light,
When helped by such as thou. Had he not all
The faculties, the graces which might call
God's blessing on his painful years of thought
And prayer and study? Found he what he
sought?

Happy who have so much to sacrifice, Happy who buy the pearl at such a price! Rare intellect, rich culture, marvellous pen, A gently potent sway o'er thinking menHumble and pure, his tale proclaims anew, 'The clean of heart have eyes to see the True.'1

He pays thee tribute thou wouldst fain forbid.

Blessed are they whose best from men is hid.

Oh! that the vain and selfish understood,

Like thee, 'the luxury of doing good,'

And how its zest is ne'er so exquisite

As when the All-seeing only seeth it.

The flower, the stream, the prayer, in secret springs—

God loves, as thou, the 'silence of good things.'²
The ways of God are surely not men's ways.
And what of all those years of studious days
Which e'en Liguori's vow,³ from boyhood till
This reverend age, could scarce more richly fill?
The self-denying, conscientious toils
That have amassed of many climes the spoils;
Not the harsh pedant's ill-assorted store—
Here learning's purest and most copious ore
Is in the crucible of thought refined,
Poured through a style as limpid as thy mind.
These, God be thanked, reap harvest scant of fame,
Though many love and more respect thy name.

² Jean Reboul, the baker poet of Nîmes.

¹ 'Beati mundo corde quoniam ipsi Deum videbunt.'

³ St. Alphonsus Liguori made a vow not to waste a moment of his time.

So be it to the end! So shall the Lord Reproach thee not: 'Thou hadst thy due reward.' Praise from a Newman's lips must needs be rare. May those thou servest heed thy wish, and spare The pang of such revealings here, that they May take us unawares upon the Accounting Day.

IN MEMORIAM C. W. R.¹

Our tongues are loosed, for thou art dead!
Our hearts may utter what they feel.
We dared not, till thy spirit fled,
Our worship and our love reveal.

But God has ended thy long pain,
Thy term of forced repose is run.
Kind friends to keep thee strove in vain—
God's will be done, God's will be done!

His gracious will had struck thee down
While fruitfullest thy labours seemed;
For God would finish thus thy crown,
And not as proud affection dreamed.

We dreamed thy ripened wisdom still Might train the *soggarths* of our race; And that thy reverend form might fill For many a year its lofty place;

¹ Charles William Russell, D.D., President of Maynooth College (1857-1880), died, February 26th, 1880, in the 68th year of his age, and the 45th year of his priesthood.

That thou wouldst spend thyself still more
In serving all, thy aid who sought,
And using well the treasured lore
By many a studious vigil bought.

But suddenly thy course is checked,

Thy hand its toils reluctant stays;

And many a hope and plan are wrecked,

'Mid sleepless nights and workless days.

Three patient years of painful rest
Ere yet the generous heart grew still.
We wanted thee—but God knows best,
And welcome be His holy will!

He would thy meek endurance prove,
And so He willed thee long to be
The grateful object of that love
Two kindred hearts poured out on thee.

Two faithful wedded hearts as pure,
As rich, as noble as thy own—
(He will remember you, be sure,
Dear friends, before the great white Throne).

Farewell! Thy strong and tender heart,
Thy earnest will, thy spacious mind,
Had well and fully played their part,
Though more, we thought, remained behind.

Much do we know, yet little know
Of all the worth that filled thy days;
For thy fine nature hated show,
Did good by stealth, and shrank from praise.

In spheres of duty wide apart,

Thy calm, unresting zeal found scope;

Of many a home and many a heart

The comfort thou and stay and hope.

Yet none of those who prized thee best, ⁶
To pain thee with their praise might dare;
And hearts with gratitude oppressed
Could only whisper it in prayer.

But thou art gone! And now we may, Unchidden, all our love proclaim, And vow, whilst we behind thee stay, To honour and to bless thy name.

Farewell! Whate'er the future brings
To us—no longer by thy side—
'Twill urge us on to higher things
To think that thou hast lived and died.

A MIRACLE OF ST. ALOYSIUS

O Aloysus, to my heart most dear
Has ever been the music of your name—
Dearer henceforward, since to-day I hear
Of yet another most engaging claim,
Which makes this grateful bosom thrill anew
With joy that such a grace was sent through you!

A tiny maiden, seven sweet springtimes old,
Was taking flight from this dark earth of ours.
Ah! had she gone, our earth more dark and cold
Would since have been, more bleak, more bare of
flowers.

But you, St. Aloysius, whispered: 'Nay, The child must longer in her exile stay.

'The world has need of her. In years to come
The old will find in her fresh heart a store
Of filial piety; a true man's home
Her love will bless, till angels hovering o'er
Will mark with wonder 'mid the world's light throng
Goodness and peace that to our heaven belong.'

God yielded to our needs and to your prayer.

How many since have blessed Him for her sake!

Decrepit age revives beneath her care,

Young hearts from hers a purer sunshine take.

O Aloysius, only heaven will tell

The fruits of this your gracious miracle.

We need her still. Ah! for a lengthened space
Keep her, kind Saint! from her bright heavenly
crown,

While every moment adds its meed of grace
And every moment finds you looking down
With fonder love and more approving smile
On her you saved from early death erewhile.

GLENAVEENA 1

I have been at Glenaveena, And on earth can scarce be seen a Sweeter spot, or happier lot, Than I've seen at Glenaveena.

Where is perched this Glenaveena? O'er the Bay from Bohernabreena, North-bound skiffs, that skirt Howth's cliffs, On the slope spy Glenaveena.

Though the sun of Terracina Shine not here, dear Signorina! Yet how bright without its light Are the days at Glenaveena!

Queenlier than Queen Christina, Yet as gay as Nora Creina, Rich in grace of soul and face Is the Lady Glenaveena.

¹ Once the beautiful seaside home of two most dear friends, and sacred now to many holy memories, affections, and hopes, which link earth very closely to heaven.

Dignified as the Czarina, Just as just as St. Justina: Young and old say 'Good as gold Is the Lady Glenaveena.'

Sweeter than the sweet verbena, Or the strains of Palestrina, Hearts rejoice at smile and voice Of the Lady Glenaveena.

But the Lord of Glenaveena! Themis, hast thou ever seen a Judge before so like to More? But my theme is Glenaveena.

Pure and peaceful Glenaveena! Never surely has there been a Calmer life, more free from strife, Than the life at Glenaveena.

I at first, O Glenaveena! Meant to give thee merely bina Carmina, at farthest trina;

¹ A lazy student of my acquaintance, who was bound to produce at least a couple of Latin verses for a certain occasion, contented himself with this minimum of two adonics:

'Accipe bina Carmina, Phoebe.'

Without this note 'bina vel trina carmina' would hardly be understood as meaning 'two or three lines.' The present nonsense-verses have a little more coherence than may appear to the uninitiated.

But by sounding final ina, Like to Homer's παρά θίνα, And by anglicising ena-As in making a lagena (Flagon) rhyme with a sestina-I of rhymes could forge, I ween, a Nearly limitless catena In thy honour, Glenaveena, Without visiting Ægina, Or enlisting Agrippina, Or the Grecian dame Alcmena, Or great Nap of St. Helena, Or his maréchal, Massena: For my muse without angina Pectoris, at home can glean a Sheaf of rhymes for Glenaveena. When in straits (like thine, Messina) She can easily subpæna Many a 'special' rhyme, as Nina Sahib, and the Scotch Edina, And the Irish Crossmolina, And the good P.P. of Feenagh-Jena, Nenagh, Carthagena, And the Jesuit Molina; Many an Ina and Malvina Fair as Goldsmith'a Angelina, Ere she caught the scarlatina,

Playing on a seraphina
Or perchance a concertina.
With the sweet saint Philomena,
Wooed by many a prayer-novena,
Join the sinner Messalina;
Link with canonised Martina
The pure novelist, Georgiana
Lady Fullerton—Macrina,
Valentina, and Sabina:
Saints by the score and rhymes galore
Throng to greet our good Regina—
Not Victoria Wilhelmina,
Also named Alexandrina,
But your Queen, O GLENAVEENA!

BABY'S CONSECRATION

No need, dear Infant, for thy friends to pray That thou mayst have a happy New Year's Day. The simple happiness of *life* is thine, The joy of merely living—to repine, To grieve, to yearn, to feel that half-despair, Which is the worst that human hearts can bear, Are far beyond thee. Thou hast childish fears And childish longings, and the 'gift of tears' Is thine already—tears that clear the head— Not the sad tears that men and women shed. Not yet can real sorrow cloud thy path: Thy life begins, thy dawn of being hath Promise of every fairest grace and joy-Parents who will not treat thee as a toy To sport with for a day, but as a soul Who, while the everlasting ages roll, Will, by God's grace, adore and bless for aye Him to whose Heart they offer thee to-day. This opening day of Eighteen-eighty-three Is the first Jour de l'An, sweet Babe, for thee.

Only by months thy life is counted yet,
Some four or five of them—I quite forget
Whether an August or September sun
Smiled on thee first, thou beauteous little one!
So frail, so tiny, yet what marvellous might
Thou wieldest round thee! Many a sleepless night
Hast cost thy tender mother—many more
Do the kind years hold still for her in store.
What else are mothers made for but to show
How far the patience of true love can go?
Well, my own mother, dead these sixteen years,
Bent o'er my crib with just the same sweet fears,
With prayers as fervent and with love as deep
As that which broods above thy rosy sleep.
God rest my mother! And may God bless thine!

But I have wandered far from my design,
Which merely purposed in a playful way
To point for thee the moral of this day,
Whereon thy parents and thy kinsfolk dear
Have kindly summoned thy poor poet here,
Not as a poet but a Christian priest,
To make this New Year's Day thy special feast
By offering up that little heart of thine
To Jesus' heart in this domestic shrine.
In this home-chapel of the Sacred Heart,
Where for thy welfare many a prayer will start

From loving lips, we lay thee, victim sweet,
Dear Infant, at the Infant Saviour's feet.

Jesus for love of thee was once a child,
And slept upon the breast of Mother mild,
The first glad Christmastide of all. And now
Before the Christmas Crib again we bow,
And at this altar, on this New Year's Day,
We consecrate thy heart, thy all, for aye,
With many a prayer and many a pious sign
Unto Our Lady and her Son Divine—
Never—no, never from their love to part,
Dear Child of Mary and the Sacred Heart.

TO M. J.1

God bless you for the pious care
Which safe has kept, though long a rover,
This tiny tome of childish prayer
Which bears my name within the cover.

The giver's name: for it was writ

By far more skilful pen than mine is.

With winning piety and wit

It glows from title-page to finis.

I had forgotten it and you—
How rude a saying for a poet!—
But can it really be true
This hand did once on you bestow it?

¹ The daughter of a distinguished native of Newry, the late Sir Patrick Jennings of Sydney, New South Wales, paid two visits to Europe—and to me. On the second occasion I threw doubt on the statement that we had met before. My visitor produced a copy of the exquisite prayer-book which Lady Gilbert (Rosa Mulholland) wrote for children, and showed my signature to a few lines of greeting to my little Australian friend. I accepted the proof and apologised for my forgetfulness by these verses.

What oceans has it crossed meanwhile,
This dainty booklet, *Holy Childhood*?
Perchance 'twas read with tear and smile
In some remote Australian wildwood.

Full oft you prayed its simple prayers
And pondered on its pleasant ponderings—
Mute confidante of childhood's cares—
Yet here it is, safe from its wanderings.

And you are safe! That southern sun Has left you fresh and sweet as ever; And one might deem your years had run At home in emerald Rostrevor.

So be it to the end. Alas!
Your 'holy Childhood' has departed:
May Womanhood as brightly pass,
As pure, as holy, as light-hearted!

RETROSPECTION 1

In the dim uncertain twilight That the close of evening brings, I sit in my lonely chamber And think of many things; And they that are wide asunder, And scenes that are far away, And words that have long been spoken, And deeds of a bygone day, Troop thickly onward, rushing Through my half-bewildered brain, From Memory's crowded storeroom Where they've long forgotten lain. My fancy leapeth backward Across some ten long years-Ten years of smiles and laughter, Flecked here and there with tears.

¹ This and the two following pieces are more than twenty years younger than the youngest of their neighbours, dating back almost to boyhood. The third of them, 'A Woodland Ramble,' will be found in print in *Duffy's Fireside Mayazine* of December 1853.

But Fancy leaps the chasm

And alights on a well-known scene,
Where in the days long bygone

My childish days have been.

'Tis a roomy, old-fashioned mansion In a quiet country place, And the whole starts up before me With each well-remembered grace; And every nook and crevice Of that dear old house doth rise, As clearly before my vision As if 'twere under my eyes. The sonsy substantial kitchen, And the parlour warm and bright, And the room where we played in the daytime, And the bed where we slept at night: The queer old corners and crannies In memory's sight arise, And a twinge of sadness comes o'er me That brings the tears to my eyes. There lay a grassy meadow The quaint green porch before, And our fields, just half a dozen, Stretched down to the fresh seashore. 'Twas indeed a pleasant homestead And noisy as a hive,

And a father and a mother dwelt there,
And merry children five.

In that quiet, happy household
The days went merrily by—
Five innocent-hearted children,
And the youngest of them I.
But ah! those times are over—
Far, far back in the past:
Sad changes come o'er all things,
Nothing but change doth last!

And so, in the solemn twilight That the meek-eyed evening brings, Here in my lonely chamber I think of many things: And many a curious question I put unto my heart, And many a childish memory Maketh the quick tears start. How fareth now that household?— Who dead, and who alive?— And where are the father and mother. And where the children five? Ah! first the kind, dear father Was called to our Father's breast: He was the first to leave us— God grant his pure soul rest!

Then sought we another dwelling And left that country-place:-Our new life's peaceful current 'Twere bootless now to trace. But where are the pleasant faces That lighted that quiet hearth? Ah! where are the cheerful voices That sang for very mirth? Two of them (souls so earnest) The clayey chords have riven That bound them to earthly homestead— No home for them but Heaven! And one brave soul hath entered On the rude battle-field. Where the true heart still conquers That can a stout arm wield. In the fight may the good God guard him And bear him safely through! Go forth, 'tis the hour of battle-Stern work hast thou to do.

All these have fled our old hearthstone;
I too am sitting here—
And thou are left, sweet sister,
Alone with our mother dear.
It must at times be dreary,
Alone where there used to be

Such a merry-hearted circle With the merriest of them thee. Thy meek, firm will keeps under All restless thoughts, I know; Yet must thy heart ring sadly With echoes of long ago. But no, I fear not for thee, For I know thy nature well, And, whithersoe'er thou goest, An angel there shall dwell. Thou couldst make of Lapland winter A springtime warm and bland-Ah no! I fear not for thee, Thou shalt reach the Better Land. But as thou journeyest onward To the sure and happy goal, Pray for a poor fond brother With a better heart than soul.

Small need is there to ponder
On future or on past;
Do each day's little duties,
All will come right at last.
And so in the thoughtful twilight
That the sad, dim evening brings,
I sit in my lonely chamber
And think of many things:

And a quiet sadness steals o'er me
That withal can comfort give:
But no more of retrospection!
In the present let us live.

SADNESS

Will you sit down beside me, sister,
And sing me some dear old rhyme?

It does my heart good to hear you
As I've heard you, ah! many's the time.

It does my heart good to hear you,
And I'm lonely and sad to-day:

So come and sit down beside me
And sing all my sadness away.

And your little hand soft and tender,
Give it me here to hold.

I like to have you so near me,
For I'm very lonely and cold,
And over my heart there's a chillness—
I'm sad, sister dear, to-day:
So come and sit down beside me
And sing all my sadness away.

Don't sing me a merry ditty,
But choose some plaintive wee song,
Round which, like bees round the flowers,
The wistful memories throng.

Sing me some simple old ballad

That you've sung for me o'er and o'er;
But better I like than any

The sad little 'Kathleen O'More.'

There is something about you, sister,
A holy, unselfish feel,
That can quiet the spirit's yearnings,
And, like grace, o'er the worn heart steal.
You wield a bright, gentle power
That the heart dares not gainsay:
So come and sit down beside me
And sing all my sadness away.

A WOODLAND RAMBLE

Where the forest trees stand in serried file

For many a mile,

'Twas there that my footsteps chanced to stray

One summer's day;

And all that I saw and heard and thought
I'm going to tell you now, unsought.

I saw the big oaks lift their heads to the sky
With port proud and high;
And I saw through the breaks in the leafy mass,
As I lay on the grass,
White armies of clouds troop across the blue,
And stray patches of sunlight peeping through.

And I saw in one place (and it pleased me well)

A thick shady dell,

Where a stream groped its way in the dark along,

While its gurgling song

Was half-choked by the tangled tree-roots rude:

And these were the things that 1 saw in the wood.

And the tittering laughter of leaves, too, I heard,
By the light winds stirred;
And the hum of the stealthily-crawling rill
Was moss-stifled and still;
And the birds saug the gleesomest songs they could,
And that was all that I heard in the wood.

And I thought how many light hearts and young
Had, those woods among,
Rambled like me, who were stricken low
Long years ago,
And who into dust have been crumbled long,
While this forest-temple's yet stout and strong.

This old forest all green and high shall wave,

When I'm in my grave,

And the lowliest shrub at our feet may be

Longer lived than we;

But Who made them all shall them all outlast,

For man's but an atom, and God is the Vast.

There ran through my head solemn thoughts like these,

That day 'mong the trees;
Whilst glimpses of sun through the roof above
Fell, like God's love,

Brightening the oak-roots black and rude; 'Twas after this fashion I thought in the wood.

And so for hours through the cool green shade

Which the larches made,

While the bees half drowned the brooklet's song

As they buzzed along,—

'Neath an awning of emerald and blue and gold,

Plucking the cowslips and nuts, I strolled.

THE LITTLE FLOWER STREWERS 1

- Dear children, kiss your flowers, and fling them at His feet:
- He comes, the Lord of flowers, of all things fair and sweet.
- His glory all is hidden, but who He is you know:
- Then throw your flowers before Him, and kiss them as you throw.
- Yet envy not the flowers that die so sweet a death—
- One heart's fond sigh is sweeter than rose's perfumed breath;
- More sweet than sweetest incense the tears of love that flow,
- The thrill of faith that mingles with every flower you throw.
- 1 These verses, which borrow their name from one of the prettiest stories ever written—'The Little Flower Seekers,' by Lady Gilbert (Rosa Mulholland)—were suggested by seeing the children kiss each handful of the flowers with which they strewed the corridors of the Convent of Mercy, Baggot Street, Dublin, during the procession of the Quarant' Orc, June 24, 1879.

- Yes, let your flowers be emblems of holy thoughts and prayers
- That from your hearts are springing—for hearts alone *He* cares.
- Oh! may your hearts before Him with loving worship glow,
- While thus you throw your flowers and kiss them as you throw.
- With lips unstained and rosy, kiss all the roses fair-
- But thorns lurk 'mid the roses, and life is full of care.
- Accept its thorns and roses—both come from God, you know:
- So bear your crosses gaily, and kiss them as you go.
- Not all your path, dear children, can smile, like this, with flowers:
- For lifetimes would be fruitless, if all were sunny hours.
- The rain and snow in season must make the roses grow:
- So throw your flowers, dear children, and kiss them as you throw.

- Ah! soon the rose-leaves wither—we, too, like flowers must die,
- But in the heavenly springtime shall bloom again on high,
- That God unveiled beholding whom 'neath these veils we know,
- And at whose feet, dear children, our flowers, our hearts, we throw.

FLOWERS FOR THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

- I've sung the little children who strewed their flow'rets fair
- Along the convent pathways, for Christ was passing there.¹
- A pious deed and holy—yet Christ Himself has said:
- 'The poor are always with you; go, tend them in My stead.'
- And Christ Himself has spoken that tender word and true:
- 'As if for Me you did it, I take whate'er you do
 For one of these My children, My weakest and My
 least.'
- Since first that word was uttered, its sway has never ceased.
- ¹ See the preceding poem. An advertisement from the Children's Hospital, 15 Temple Street, Dublin, states: 'The members of the Flower Association make the wards look bright and beautiful with bouquets, supplied every week by their kindly hands. The arrival of these lovely and odorous gifts is a delight to the sick children.'

FLOWERS FOR THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL 101

- That word, and yet another: when once the Saviour smiled,
- And, raising to His bosom, caressed a little child;
- And when the children clustered too closely round His knee:
- 'Of such is heaven's bright kingdom—ah! let them come to Me.'
- Those words of meek entreaty arc strong and mighty still—
- The breast of many a mother with patient love they fill;
- Round many a puny outcast, round many an orphan lone,
- Those blessed words of Jesus a sheltering arm have thrown.
- Those words make many a virgin vow all her life away
- To save poor little children—but here my lighter lay
- Would sing of simpler service, more passing, yet most true,
- Which children unto children for love of Jesus do.

Those words make gentle maidens search all their garden-bowers,

From plant and shrub to rifle their freight of fragrant flowers,

Not now for sacred pageant to deck God's altarshrine,

Yet for a purpose holy and almost as divine.

They bring their flowers to solace the tiny captives' chains,

To cheer with scent and colour sick childhood's aches and pains,

To give a glimpse of nature, of sunny air and sky,

Where, pale and maimed and crippled, the little children lie.

O children rich and healthy! O merry girl and boy!

Give thanks to God our Father for all that you enjoy.

He gives you dainty raiment and sturdy strength of limb,

Bright homes and loving parents—what will you give to Him?

FLOWERS FOR THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL 103

'Whate'er for these poor children you do is done for Me.'

Ah! in each sickly infant the Infant Jesus see.

As if 'twere He in person, on these your bounties shower—

Kind words and food and clothing and toy and pretty flower.

THE AMETHYST

A TEMPERANCE LECTURE

Though I might well invoke the holiest muse That poet-saint has ever dared to choose, So sacred is the purpose of my strain— Let me begin it in a lighter vein By venturing in rhymèd prose to seek My title's meaning in a schoolboy's Greek. From alpha 'non' and methuo 'ebrius sum' Our amethyst's sonorous name has come: Implying that the toper may at need From alcohol's seductive spell be freed, If he as antidote this stone secure— A 'precious stone,' indeed, could it ensure The bursting of that miserable chain Which self-made captives strive to rend in twain. Oh, might such amethysts in myriads gleam, As thick as shamrocks o'er our sod! Vain dream! For no mechanical device can save The wretches who this subtle poison crave.

The feeble Will itself, upheld by grace,
Must all its powers for the combat brace.
Reason and common sense will urge in vain,
And this dread thraldom undisturbed remain,
If Thou, O Lord, sustain not and assist—
Thy grace alone is our true amethyst.

But with this cure supreme for every ill, With this divine support of man's weak will, More human means, less lofty motives, may Their succour lend and help to win the day. One motive which should move each loving son Of our dear land to fear, abhor, and shun The drunkard's most ignoble guilt is this: Poor Ireland's enemies are fain to hiss Their spiteful sneers against her children's fame; What other slur can fall upon their name Except this noisy, self-parading sin? Less sinful sometimes than the selfish grin Of the sleek hypocrite who hides the while In his own heart far deeper, deadlier guile— Worse sins than this, though more respectable, Surer, though more decorous, roads to hell. But, if we love our country, we must labour, Each in himself, and then with friend and neighbour, By work, word, prayer, to crush and overthrow This crafty colleague of the fiends belowTo dry this source of sin and shame and strife, Which poisons and defiles full many a life.

O brothers, if in truth you Erin love, Ye above all, who must as exiles rove, Whether in England's grimy cities bound, Or in new worlds, new homes, new hopes you've found:

Ye who among cold, watchful strangers dwell, Show that you love the dear old country well: Be honest, temperate, and pure of life; Strive hard, but oh! keep stainless in the strife. Do credit to the homeland of your love—Yourselves true patriots you thus will prove. A drunken patriot is a lie and fraud; He loves not Ireland who loves not God.

Dear Irish peasant, brave and pure and true,
Ah! let this scandal rest no more on you!
Honest, contented with your scanty store,
And Catholic, aye to the very core;
Yet why let Pharisees their eyebrows lift
At your intemperance and lack of thrift?
If by no nation are ye left behind
In generous qualities and gifts of mind,
Why not do justice to your creed and race
By stamping out this vulgar, vile disgrace?

Not that the land we cherish as our mother,
E'en on this count is guiltier than another
To whom no Father Mathew e'er was sent.
They are not worst of sinners who repent:
The Magdalene was not the worst, but best;
And yet her name still stands for all the rest.
Ay, others were far worse than Magdalene,
And thirstier races on this earth are seen
Than they to whom the Capuchin once preached;
But meek repentance, loudly self-impeached,
Oft seems more guilty in the sight of men,
For hearts and thoughts come not within their ken.
Yet still, with all excuses duly made,
We have too much to blush for, I'm afraid.

We all love Ireland. There are fairer lands,
More fruitful soils, more bay-indented strands,
Far statelier mountains, streams of vaster flood,—
But when our green Isle rose, God saw 'twas good,¹
And poured His blessing on her vales and hills.
What a huge space this tiny islet fills
In history as writ by human pen!
But how her record shines in angels' ken!

¹ A plagiarism, of course, from Dr. Drennan's 'beautiful but rebellious song,'

^{&#}x27;When Erin first rose from the dark, swelling flood, God blessed the green island, and saw it was good.'

In a half-pitying, patronising way

Men say 'Poor Ireland!' as men used to say
'Poor Noll!' in our own gifted Goldsmith's day.

I've sometimes thought our Celtic island-home,

And her big step-sister whom leagues of foam

And of sea-sickness keep from her apart,

Are, in their qualities of head and heart,

Contrasted like that curious pair of friends

Whose fame on Boswell's gossip much depends:

Though burly Doctor Sam is wise and good

(If just a little greedy, loud and rude),

Who now reads Johnson? Goldsmith's loved and read,

The laurels still are green around his head.

Thy son, O Erin, is a type of thee,

Least 'mid the nations, Poland of the sea—¹

A happier Poland that can never be

Absorbed, partitioned, but distinct, unique,

Though thou great Shakspere's plastic language speak,

Language more fit for eloquence and prayer
When a soft Irish accent lurketh there.
Like Goldsmith, too, whose very faults could charm,
His countrymen are apt themselves to harm.
The genial, hospitable Celtic heart,
Cheerful and social, plays no doubt its part

 $^{^{1}}$ Λ phrase of Montal embert's.

In leading many a fine poor soul astray
In this good-natured but most ruinous way.
Where all are bad, there is not much to choose,
But basest is the solitary booze.
No Irish drunkard takes his pastime so;
When he gets drunk, he lets the neighbours know.

May God forgive the poets who have sung Those pleasant songs in every human tongue Which have, alas! too bright a halo flung Around 'the Drink' of every taste and hue, The ruby wine, brown ale, and mountain dew! But all the poetry and music pall For those who into beastly bondage fall. Shame on the drunkard! made by heaven's deeree A little lower than the angels, he, Endowed with mind and heart almost divine, Degrades himself beneath the grovelling swine. Shame on the drunkard! He's a selfish brute: Nay, so to eall him is a mild salute; 'Brute' is for him a complimentary name— What beast e'er wallowed in such senseless shame? Alas, that poor dumb Instinct holds its own, While godlike Reason is debased, o'erthrown! Beasts cease from drinking when their thirst has ceased-

The sot drinks on till he outbeasts the beast.

Shame on the man who can ignore, displace,
His human nature and his God-given grace.
Nature is fain the moderate use to teach
Of all God's gifts that lie within our reach;
But grace inspires (and nature gives consent)
To stretch the wholesome principle of Lent
Beyond the forty days of fast and prayer.
To have the best of all things here and there,
On earth, in heaven, were something more than fair.

Many are safe unpledged, yet share the yoke Of total abstinence with weaker folk Whose only safety is to never touch. From 'just a little' to 'a deal too much,' The passage is more easy than to fall Into excess from drinking none at all. No fear of turning dizzy if men keep Ten yards from where the precipice hangs steep; But let them saunter close beside the brink—Hark to that shriek! They stagger, fall, and sink. This policy as cowardice you brand: Not cowards they, but heroes who can stand Firm, day by day, against the tempter's art. Such cowardice is oft a brave man's part.

Nor are drink's evils all confined to those
Who carry their credentials on their nose—

Drunkard's proboscis blotched and rubicund.
Men who would boast of an uncommon fund
Of common sense, discretion, and good taste—
Who never once their family disgraced
By reckless habits or by tipsy broil:
Even these their Christian manhood sadly spoil
By self-indulgence which escapes from blame,
Albeit the source of secret sin and shame.
When scandal ceases, not all harm doth cease:
Foul crimes there are, not known to the police.
Into how many sins that soil and mar
Drink drags the man who 'never goes too far'!

We might, however, let the drunkard fall Unpitied to his doom, if that were all. But ah! the innocent are forced to share The punishment which he alone should bear. He blights and blasts not only his own life, But spreads around him want and sin and strife. God help the drunkard's children and his wife!

When Mary Dempsey changed her maiden name And Mrs. Thomas Houlihan became,
She knew that Tom, poor fellow, took a drop;
But he, of course, engaged to put a stop
To that and every other evil practice,
If she would only have him. And the fact is

He kept his word beyond the honeymoon. Ah, those were happy, happy days! But soon The wicked craving came on him again, Helped by the words and deeds of comrade men, Who pressed him oft to join them in a 'thrate.' His poor young wife pined, waiting for him late, And often would the heart within her sink To see Tom stagger in, 'disguised in drink'-Too well disguised! For who could know him now, The stalwart youth, with brave, ingenuous brow, Who won her heart in happy days gone by? Oft through long lonely hours she'd weep and sigh While he preferred the stupid tankard's foam To the true comforts of a loving home. Home, home, sweet home! It maddens one to think

Of happy homes laid desolate by drink.

Poor Mary Dempsey, this is what you got
By linking with a drunkard's life your lot!

How happy might your humble home have been,
Pure, holy, comfortable, gay, serene!

Such homes in thousands form a happy state,
And make a nation prosperous and great—
Each lowly home a little world apart,
And each most dear to the Redeemer's heart.

Such was Tom Houlihan's at first. Alas'

His lucid fits of penitence soon pass;

He settles down to sottish, dull despair— His broken-hearted wife has now no prayer But that he may escape a drunkard's fate, And die repentant at the last, though late.

I've shrunk from telling the whole story through,
Story, alas! well known to me and you.
The children whom God trusted to his care,
Towards whom he still a father's love doth bear,
For whom (but for this heartless vice) he'd die—
Now, if these little ones with hunger cry,
He glares upon them with fierce, bloodshot eye,
Spurns them with angry oath, and sneaks away
To where the flaring gas turns night to day,
And, while they starve, he slakes his drunken
thirst—

O cruel vice! tyrannical, accursed.

I know—for surely temperance advocate

Ought not to be in speech intemperate,

Intoxicated by his own verbosity,

As Dizzy once remarked with mock pomposity 1—

I know full well there are in many a case

Excuses many. Not all monsters base

^{1 &#}x27;Intoxicated with the exuberance of his own verbosity,' was one of Lord Beaconsfield's elaborate gibes against his great rival, Mr. Gladstone.

Are these poor drunkards. Life is hard and dull, And man is weak, and God is merciful. Easy for those fenced safely round from birth With the best blessings of this fallen earth, A happy home, religious parents' care, Firm watchful training, sacraments, and prayer, Pure pleasure that from filthy pleasure weans, Good education, tastes refined, fair means, Congenial work (well paid) to fill the day, And books to while a leisure hour away: So circumstanced, a man through life might pass Without the solace of the glittering glass. He whom a well-cooked dinner waits at home May safe through streets of public-houses roam; But the poor man whose lot is full of gloom, His home at best one shabby, stuffy room, Not overstocked with furniture or food-'Come in here, Jack, a drop will do you good'-How can poor Jack refuse such respite pleasant From hopeless Future and from sordid Present?

Not that home-comfort, talent, wealth, and ease Are for a sober life sure guarantees.

No rank, no state, and even no sex can be From this fell passion or its peril free.

The brightest genius is by this undone,
Like Ancient Mariner and gifted son.¹

¹ Hartley Coleridge, and S. T. C.

O womanhood, kind, tender-hearted, pure!
Alas, not even thy sacred name is sure
'Gainst this malignant spell, this damning taint—
But no, I cannot, will not, dare not paint
That saddest scene on God's poor earth below,
Worst depth of all life's tragedy of woe,
Plague-spot unholy, with dire miseries rife—
The miscalled home cursed with a drunken wife.

Dear Irish men, dear Irish women, pray That Ireland, having seen her darkest day, May, in the years that now before her lie, In peace and purity serve God on high. But with your prayers let deeds go hand in hand; Prove thus your love for faith and fatherland. Let not the scribe who hates our race and creed Point out in scorn this rank, unsightly weed In our fair island-garden. Oh, uproot, Lest it should spread apace and spoil the fruit So rich and various in the Master's eye. Quickly this world, its griefs and joys, pass by; Help us, Almighty God, to wend our way Safe through life's sins and sorrows day by day. Weak as we are, all foes we shall resist, Thy grace our armour and our amethyst.

MONOTONY AND THE LARK

A PROSE IDYL

'How strange one never tires of the lark!' We were strolling round and round the garden, he and she, and little Mary and I—he and she arm-in-arm, and I hand-in-hand with little Mary,—and the singing of the lark overhead seemed a part of the August sunshine. And my gentle cousin Annie said: 'How strange one never tires of the lark!'

Yes, although it is so monotonous: on and on, almost the same always. A mere trill of joy, a mere gush of love and gratitude, a mere trickle of the simplest melody. No triumphant burst, no riotous gurgle, no pathetic murmur, no agonising spasm, no subtle gradation, no mellow fall from treble down to bass, no splendid leap from bass up to treble. On and on, a few artless, unvarying notes. And yet it never tires us, it is always musical, and fresh, and meekly joyous—image of the one unceasing song of the blessed, image of the rapturous monotony of heaven.

Is there not pain in a restless multiplicity of pleasure? Amidst the whirl of changes, is not the heart haunted by a vague dread that the next change may be sadly for the worse? It is a symptom of disease in the soul to stand in need of such vicissitudes. Only commonplace souls, earthy souls, souls without depth or compass, souls with paltry resources of their own, and slavishly dependent upon outward things-none but these desire, none but these can endure, perpetual variety, excitement, travel, change of scene, change of society, change of employment, change of amusement, change of change. The higher natures are stable, equable, self-contained, selfsustaining, placid, domestic-concentrated in their large memories, and in their larger thoughts and hopes—seeking and finding pleasure in a noble loyalty to duty, and regarding duty, not as a taskmistress to be served coldly for wages during as short a day as possible, but as a queenly mother, to live with, and cherish, and reverence, and love, and serve, day and night, in sunshine and in darkness, for life-at home with themselves, at home with their conscience and their God, at home in their own homes, at home with a sinless and happy monotony.

^{&#}x27;How strange one never tires of the lark!' said

the gentlest of my gentle cousins, Annie. And so, while we talked, and were silent, and smiled, and looked at each other, and at the flowers (alas! there was one of us who could not see the flowers except as memory might paint them), we went round and round the garden walks, he and his sisters and I, unwearied by the sameness, armin-arm, and hand-in-hand. And all the while the lark, to his own keen delight and ours, kept up his monotonous carol, high up out of sight, above the field of clover yonder, outside our garden's hedge; and his singing, like the brightness and the odour of the flowers and of the fruits, almost seemed to be a part of the summer sunshine.

But, ah! there is no sunshine now and no singing. It is winter. Is the lark dead? I know not; but my gentle cousin Annie is with God. And twice the daisies have gleamed in pink and white over the grave of him who could not see the flowers, but who shall see God for ever.

A main a Chan mann a second all in a 111 and

Again, after many years, this withered leaf flutters across my path. Perhaps God may use it as a message to some hearts simple and young as ours were then. Ay, and as theirs are still; for now they are all three gone home to God. Their

bodies are in the same tomb, and their souls, I am sure, are in the same heaven; and they are praying, I am sure, for those who remain behind. One of those who remain behind writes: 'It feels lonely, having no elder sister, but we get on very well, though we shall have need of many more acts of resignation than we should have had if Mary had been left to us,' she, namely, with whom hand-in-hand I walked round the garden in that August forenoon long ago, while the sun shone and the lark sang overhead.

THE FIRST REDBREAST

A LEGEND OF GOOD FRIDAY

A QUAINT and childish story, often told,
And worth, perchance, the telling, for it steals
Through rustic Christendom; and boyhood, bold
And almost pitiless in pastime, feels
The lesson its simplicity conceals.
Hence kind Tradition, to protect from wrong
A gentle tribe of choristers, appeals
To this ancestral sacredness, so long
In grateful memory shrined, and now in grateful song.

One Friday's noon a snowy-breasted bird Was flying in the darkness o'er a steep Nigh to Judea's capital, where stirred The rabble's murmur sullenly and deep. Far had it sailed since sunrise, and the sweep

^{1 &#}x27;Un fripon d'enfant (cet âge est sans pitié).'—La Fontaine. 120

Of its brown wing grew languid, and it longed To rest a while on some green bough, and peep Around the mass that on the hill-side thronged, As if to learn whereto such pageant stern belonged.

The robin whitebreast spied a Cross of wood
That lifted o'er the din its gory freight.
Beneath, the sorrow-stricken Mother stood,
And silent wailed her Child's less cruel fate.
But lest she mourn all lone and desolate,
Has reason whispered to that fluttering breast,
Whom, Whom, on Whom those fiends their fury
sate?

Mark how it throbs with pity, nor can rest, Till it has freed its Lord, or tried its little best.

And see, with tiny beak it fiercely flies,

To wrench the nails that bind the Captive fast.

Ah! vain, all vain those eager panting cries,

That quivering agony! It sinks at last,

Foiled in the generous strife, and glares aghast

To see the thorn-crowned Head droop faint and low,

Mute the pale lips, the gracious brow o'ercast;
While from the shattered palms the red drops flow,
Staining the pious bird's smooth breast of speckless
snow.

That snow thus ruddied fixed the tinge of all
The after-race of robins; and 'tis said,
Heaven's fondest care doth on the robin fall,
In memory of that scene on Calvary sped.
Hence, urchins rude, in quest of plunder led
To prowl round hedges, never dare to touch
The wee white-speckled eggs or mossy bed
Of 'God's own bird.' So from the spoiler's
clutch

Would you, God's child, be free? Ah! feel for Jesus much.

IRISH LITERARY 'LEARICS'

A Learic—so called from Edward Lear, whose Book of Nonsense brought the thing into vogue—is a single-stanza poem in the metre of Lady Morgan's 'Kate Kearney,' and generally a little comical about some place or person.

]

The Author of 'The History of Dublin'
Thy marvellous lore, Sir John Gilbert,
Can crack the most obdurate filbert,
And many a mystery
In Erin's dark history
Has been by thy critical skill bared.

11

The Author of 'Vagrant Verses'

Lady Gilbert, once Rosa Mulholland, Weaves stories most deftly of all, and Her 'Verses,' though 'Vagrant,' Are pure, fresh, and fragrant— Oft drawn from the Acta of Bolland.

¹ St. Barbara, St. Brigid, etc., in the Acta Sanctorum of the Bollandists.

III

The Author of 'Irish Idylls'

The Gaskell of Erin, Jane Barlow,
Dwells nearer to Dublin than Carlow.
Irish life with its side ills
Shines out in her 'Idylls,'
With much of the pathos of Marlowe.

VI

The Author of 'A Fairy Changeling and other Poems'

Thy name, Dora Sigerson Shorter,
(Not always pronounced as it ort ter,¹)
Matrimonially rounded,
Can now be compounded
In this amphibrachian mortar.

v

The Editor of 'Cicero's Letters'

Professor R. Yelverton Tyrrell
In Latin is brisk as a squirrel;
And e'en his Greek prose
As pleasantly flows
As the English of Lang or of Birrell.

 $^{^{\}scriptscriptstyle 1}$ The g 'ought to' have its hard sound.

VI

The Author of 'Greek Life and Thought.'

A Greek (not a Turk) is Mahaffy.
With Egyptological chaff he
Has dealt on the plan
Of that muscular man
In Cymric song famous as Taffy.

VII

The Author of 'Shakspeare, his Mind and Art'

In matters Shakespearian, Dowden
Is a glorified Mrs. Clark (Cowden).
He has mixed in the mêlée
That rages around Shelley,
But he cares not for Lingard or Plowden.

VIII

The Author of 'Hurrish'

I wish that Miss Emily Lawless
In her studies of Ireland saw less
Of dark ugly shade—
The sketch she has made
Is surely not truthful or flawless.

XI

The Author of 'A Cluster of Nuts'

Katherine Tynan is now Mrs. Hinkson,
But her maiden name pleasantly links on
To that wonderful throng
Of story and song
Which amazes the more that one thinks on.

Х

The Author of 'The Mystery of Killard'

I knew you a boy, Richard Dowling,
And, though there's a good deal of howling
In your thrilling romances,
Most gentle your glance is,
And your face always smiling, not scowling.

XI

The Author of 'In a North Country Village'

The charm of her stories enhances.

Mrs. Blundell, self-called 'M. E. Francis,'
As bright and as keen as a lance is.
Her plots are well knit,
And a delicate wit

THE OAK AND THE REED

(Le Chêne et le Roseau of La Fontaine)

To the Reed one day the Oak-tree said:
'Good reason hast thou discontented to be
With Nature. A wren is a burden for thee!
The gentlest of breezes that chances to blow,
Searce wrinkling the face of the waters below,
Forces thee to bow the head.

But I not thus!

My crest, sublime as the Caneasus,
Bars the sunbeam's golden path
And braves the tempest's wrath.
For thee all is north-wind, all zephyr for me.
Nay, if thy birthplace had happened to be
Beneath the sheltering foliage found
With which I cover the country round,
Thy lot were then less harshly cast—
I'd screen thee from the stormy blast.
But, no, thy cradle we oftenest find
On the humid shores of the realms of wind.
Ah, Nature to thee is unjust indeed.'

'Your compassion,' replies the Reed,
'Springs from a kindly heart. But spare
This needless care—
The winds are more to be feared by you:
I do not break but bend.
Till now 'gainst the worst their rage could do,
Erect, unbending, you've stood, 'tis true:
But wait for the end!'

As he spake the word,
From the horizon's verge is heard
The terrible rush of the hurricane—
Fiercest that ever the north
From his flanks sent forth!
The Reed bows low, the Oak stands fast.
The storm-fiend puts forth his might again:
And prone on the earth at last
Lieth he who had raised to the skies his head
And with his feet had touched the empire of the dead.

A FATHER'S MEMORY

Qui es in cælis!

They sing of mother's love. 'Tis well;
For in the very word doth dwell
Pure poesy. But have I thought
As oft and fondly as I ought
Of still another grace which came
To me—another, yet the same?
What richer gift has heaven above
To lend us than a father's love?

My father died when I was young,
Before my heart had taught my tongue
To be its poor interpreter—
Nay, he was taken from us ere
My heart itself had learned to thrill
With anguish and with joy that fill
The eyes with sad or happy tears.
He only saw my opening years:
And so, when walking by his side,
I never kissed his hand or tried

To falter forth my grateful love.
But surely in the home above,
'Mid heavenly joys, this joy is given,
Father, by Thee who art in heaven,
That dwellers in that world of bliss
Still love the friends they loved in this,
And smile upon us while we yearn
To make some tardy, cold return
For the unselfish toil and pain
Spent on us with such scanty gain
Of thanks or love—whence have accrued
Such long arrears of gratitude.

Thou, too, my father, art in heaven.
Surely Our Father hath forgiven
What stains soever may have clung
To thee earth's weary ways among.
Therefore my heart looks up and pays
The debt long due of love and praise,
Speaking as if thou still wert here
To smile and listen, father dear!
I bless and thank thee for the love
Which oft hung wistfully above
The cradle of my infant sleep.
I bless and thank thee, till I weep,
For all thou wouldst have done for me
Had God ordained that thou shouldst be

The guardian of my riper years, Partaker in their hopes and fears. God willed not thus: He thee removed, But left a mother who has proved That in a woman's heart can dwell Much of a father's strength as well. Her presence and thy memory Made 'Home' a holy word for me. Thank God, sin's silliness is shown On earth and not in heaven alone. E'en on this fallen sinful earth True joy from duty takes its birth. The false-named 'man of pleasure' knows No joys so deep, so true, as those Which e'en from cares and troubles come Within a loving Christian home. Such home was mine until the day Which called me from its peace away To do the will of God elsewhere. May I one day thy new home share! Till then, full often will I kneel And pray for thee, although I feel That He who shares with thee His name, And deigns my filial love to claim, Thy everlasting crown has given, And thou, my father, art in heaven.

FATHER THOMAS BURKE, O.P.

Mute on earth too soon, the Preacher,
Greatest that our land can boast—
He whose heart with throb electric
Stirred the hearts of many a host—
He whose voice rang loudest, clearest,
O'er the clamours of the world—
He whose mighty arm the banner
Of the Christian law unfurled
To the upturned gaze of millions
In his own green island-home,
And where'er beyond the oceans
Irish exiles yearning roam.

He was born where glides the Corrib
Into the Atlantic wave,
And upon the Tallaght hill-side
They have dug his holy grave.
So from west to east of Erin,
And from furthest north to south,
Is his love in every bosom
And his name in every mouth:

Nay, throughout the world-wide Ireland, Where our kinsmen pray and work, Many a cry mounts now to heaven, 'May God rest thee, Father Burke!'

Scarce had sped his merry boyhood
When the dear white robe he donned,
Never worn with braver bearing
Or with fealty more fond.
Quickly of his Angel name-saint
Mastered he the marvellous 'Sum,'
But he never, like that patron,
Could have passed as dull or dumb; '
For his wealth of thought and fancy,
And his voice of music strong,
Soon betrayed their wondrous power
To enchant the listening throng.

Through his lips God spoke. The sinner Felt the horror of his sin,
And the virtuous took courage,
Nobler heights to scale and win.
God's one Church, her rites and dogmas,
In his words shone out most fair,

¹ The Angel of the Schools, the author of the Summa Theologica, was so silent and modest that his fellow-students, at the beginning of his career, nicknamed him the Dumb Ox.

And those words fed starving orphans,
Built up many a house of prayer.
Celtic hearts grew, as they heard him,
Of their race and faith more proud,
And his country's fierce defamer
Shrank before his onset, cowed.

But the Preacher was a martyr.

This grand nature should be proved
In the crucible of suffering:
So it pleased the Lord he loved.
Years on years of wasting torture
Killed the strong man day by day,
But he bore his cross unshrinking,
With a patience brave and gay.
E'en the glow of inspiration
Scarcely could his pangs restrain,
And the hearers thrilled with rapture
While the preacher writhed with pain.

Dear to myriads the world over,
Dearest to the cherished few
Who were his by ties of nature,
Whom he loved with love as true,
As absorbing, fond, and trustful,
As a loving-hearted boy:

Years but made his heart more tender
To his kinsfolks' grief and joy.
To one loved young heart in anguish,
'Mid his own sore pains he said:
'Gladly, gladly, O my darling,
Would I suffer in thy stead.'

Genius such as, in a cycle,
Only dowers a brilliant few—
Wit the keenest and the brightest,
With a kind heart gleaming through:
Poorest these of all the graces
Showered on Dominic's glorious son.
But his toils and prayers and penance
Richest guerdon now have won;
And a hundred thousand welcomes
Welcome to the heavenly feast
Him the prince of Friars Preachers,
Him the noble Irish priest.

THE OLD SPOT

The robins sing, the river flows,

The leaves are just as green;

But, ah! but, ah! my heart, God knows,

Is not as it has been.

Kind faces smile through cheerful tears, Kind voices murmur round, And hands, far sundered all these years, The warm old clasp have found.

Again my yearning steps have strayed
Back to the dear old spot;
But where the mates that with me played?
I seek, and find them not.

The boy, so thoughtless, free, and bold,
Plays in the world his part;
The childish heart I knew of old
Is now a woman's heart.

The breeze blows keen, the sun shines on,
The waves rush up the shore;
But, ah! but, ah! old times are gone,
And home is home no more.

It matters not. We are too fain

To nestle here below,

Until the harsh winds and the rain

Arouse us. Better so!

Dear pious hearts, may my place be Near yours in that dark dell Where on the Judge's lips we'll see 'Welcome!'

But now-farewell!

O DEATH, MY DEATH!

'O DEATH, my death that somewhere waits for me—'1

What sort of death I wonder will it be,
Sudden or slow! A moment's shock, all o'er!
Or shall Death knock discreetly at my door,
As if for but a passing visit come,
Then, entering, make himself so much at home
That one grows used to him, forgets 'tis Death!
How, when, and where shall stop this vital breath
Which comes and goes for me unnoticed now?
But, when death's dew lies thick upon my brow,
Each frightened gasp may be a pang, a strife
For some few moments more of dying life,
So hard an agony that kindest friend
Will pray God's pity for a speedy end.
Or else life lingers on, a faint dull spark,
Whose fading keenest watcher cannot mark—

¹ This is the first line of an impressive sonnet by Father Ryder, Cardinal Newman's successor as Superior of the Oratory at Birmingham.

The flickering taper wastes so slowly out That those who pray there are a while in doubt Whether to pray for dying or for dead, Or if the struggling soul indeed has fled.

Slow deaths and sudden deaths occur each day; Which shall be mine no man on earth can say, And even in heaven, perhaps God only knows-A secret which He never will disclose Till those around my deathbed say, 'Tis o'er'-If quiet deathbed be for me in store. The death that shall be mine I now embrace, Accepting all—the time, the kind, the place— Pleading alone for God's all-pardoning grace. Almighty God, before Thy will I bow And wish to do and be in all things now And henceforth all that I shall wish for then. All men must die, but Thou hast died for men. To Thee for mercy till the end I'll cry; May 'Jesus! Jesus!' be my parting sigh. O God, have mercy on me when I die!

LAND! LAND!1

My dying hour, how near art thou?
Or near or far, my head I bow
Before God's ordinance supreme;
But ah, how priceless then will seem
Each moment rashly squandered now!

Teach me, for thou canst teach me, how
These fleeting instants to endow
With worth that may the past redeem,
My dying hour!

My barque, that late with buoyant prow
The sunny waves did gaily plough,
Now through the sunset's fading gleam
Drifts dimly shoreward in a dream.
I feel the land breeze on my brow,
My dying hour!

¹ The London Correspondent of the *Daily Express* (May 20, 1898) stated on the authority of a gentleman who had just visited Hawarden that these lines were among the last that interested Mr. Gladstone on his deathbed.

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MAJOR E. A. P. Hobday, R.A., Deputy Assistant Adjt, and Qr. Master General Malakand Force, is the son of Lt.-Col. T. F. Hobday, Bengal Staff Corps, and was born May 17th, 1859. Entered Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, in 1877, and joined Royal Artillery in 1879. Served in India till 1884, when was appointed to R.H.A. in 1871 and joined Again R.A. in 1887, and acted as A.D.C. to Sir Auckland Colvin, Lt.-Gov. N.W. Provinces, during winters of 1887—1888. Was appointed A.D.C. to Lord Roberts, then Commander-in-Chief in India, in May, 1888. After varied services in India, he went, on the outbreak of frontier war in 1897, to the relief of Malakand as Staff Officer to Col. Reid, commanding relief column, and was present during latter half of siege of Malakand and relief of Chakdara. Marched up Swat Valley as Staff Officer of Flying Column during Mad Mullah's raid in 1898. Major Hobday has gained numerous prizes at Art Exhibitons, is a well known amateur actor, and has produced several burlesques. Faust, which was given by the Guards, at Chelsea, was produced by him in conjunction with Mr. Martin. He has also written some songs (My bearer, Gungadeen for instance), and is very fond of sport.

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"Two voices are there: One is of the Sea. One of the mountains,"

is known wherever the English language is spoken. The sea was Mr. Russell's domain by literary inheritance, but not content with that he shipped at the age of thirteen as a midshipman, voyaging to India, Australia, and China. In 1874 he published his first nautical novel, John Holdsworth, Chief Mate, which was followed by The Wreck of the "Grosvenor." He is now admittedly the chief of all living nautical novelists. Of late years Mr. Clark Russell's health has not been good, but the enforced seclusion has fortunately resulted in his being able to devote himself more ardently than ever to his literary work.

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THE

MR. POTTERSBY.

By JAY HICKORY WOOD.

The Editor of the "Temple Magazine" (in an article on "New Humorists" isays: "I must allude to the clever work of Jay Hickory Wood, whose portrait I have the pleasure of presenting. The 'Chronicles of Mr. Pottersby 'has had a warm reception, and deserves it. The book is capital reading. I was not surprised to find that Mr. Clifford Harrison, one of the shrewdest observers of current literature, has already added pieces by Jay Hickory Wood to his répertoire."

Morning Leader: "Glows with fun. As I read I enjoyed an unwonted feeling of exhilaration."

Western Mcrcury; "One of the wittiest volumes we have read this season. Mr. Wood is a consummate master of wit."

Manchester City News: "As humorous, as distinct, and as original as Artemus Ward.
Will be read with a constant ripple of amusement."

Nottingham Guardian: "A humorist of the first order. Nothing could be more quaintly funny."





" Nothing but Nonsense" has two publics. That it is the funniest picture book for children published during the past year is the general verdict. The irresistibly comic coloured grotesques of the Kangaroo" who had such pleasant ways, Who never stayed at home at nights, and stoffed out all his days;" of the Elephant with a top hat and an umbrella making daisy chains; of the Crocodile whom to have trusted with cats "might have made them gay," and who " had no guile in her sweet smile, And yet I kept away" may be guaranteed to set the entire nursery in an uproar of delight. But,-like Lear and Lewis Carroll,-Miss Kernahan, while winning the children's hearts, can also win a chuckle from the grave "grown-ups." The story of the novelist who told the interviewer that " For convincing reasons, he thought poorly of the Irish Sea" is funny, without the picture of the yellow-faced sufferer leaning over the side of the ship. . The Minor Poet and the Kangaroo," and "The Novelist and the Interviewer" are full of sly satire and humour. This is the sort of book which, though in constant request in the Nursery, will again and again be carried to the Drawing Room to set visitors in a roar.

NOTHING

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<u>BUT</u> . .

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NONSENSE.

The Nonsense Yerses
By MARY KERNAHAN.

The Coloured Grotesques
By TONY LUDOVICI.

Mr. Punch says: "Life would not be worth living without its moments of nonsense, and Mary Kernahan's book is 'Nothing but Nonsense,' and very good it is. The pictures are simply beautifully ridiculous."

Daily Telegraph: "Laughter, loud and long, awaits those who dive into the pages of Nothing but Nonsense."

The Spectator says: "There are many attempts at this kind of thing year after year, but few are so successful as 'Nothing but Nonsense."

The Morning Post, in an article on the book, says: "The advent of a new humorous draughtsman is a subject for congratulation... Has imparted an amount of spontaneous fun to his illustrations that is quite astonishing."





Specimen Illustration from "Tom Ossington's Ghost" (Reduced).

MR. RICHARD MARSH has, in an incredibly short space of time, won a place for himself at the very head of the novelists who deal with the supernatural. During the last few years occasional short stories have appeared in Cornhill and elsewhere which convinced every one who read them that a new writer of extraordinary daring and imagination had arisen. Any story of his that is once read, cannot again be forgotten, and in Tom Ossington's Ghost his almost uncanny power in dealing with the shadow world is seen at its best. Mr. Marsh, who is quite a young man, lives an openair life in the country, where he spends his days in sport of every description, and his nights in writing stories which, for making the flesh creep, have no equal in the literature of to-day.



A book to make the flesh creep. Mr. Marsh is the end of the-century Edgar Allen Poe—an admitted master of the element of horror and of the supernatural. "Tom Ossington's Ghost," is one of the most uncanny stories he has ever written.





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Ossington's

GHOST.

By RICHARD MARSH,

Author of "The Beetle: a Mystery," etc.

Truth: "I read 'Tom Ossington's Ghost' the other night and was afraid to go upstairs in the dark after it."

To-Day: "An entrancing book, but people with weak nerves had better not read it at night."

The World: "Mr. Marsh has been inspired by an entirely original idea, and has worked it out with great ingenuity. We like the weird, but not repulsive story better than anything he has ever done."



MR. Bowden regrets that he is unable to give a portrait or biography of "Sidney Pickering," as that writer wishes to preserve strict anonymity. May Mr. Bowden, instead, call attention to the very interesting reference to anonymous authors which appears in Professor Max Muller's "German Love"?

"Wanderers" is a book which deserves the name of literature. It tells of a gentleman of family and position who was of irreclaimable gipsy instincts. and wandered up and down the country, living in the open air, meeting strange folks. and seeing strange sights. It reminds us sometimes of Stevenson. sometimes of Borrow. It will not appeal to the devourer of "shockers," but it is quite out of the common, and lovers of nature and of literature will find it refreshing, quaint, and original.

From Professor Max Muller's "German Love."

She showed me the picture, and waited to hear what I should say. It was the portrait of a man of middle age, in old German costume. The expression was dreamy and resigned, but yet so true that one could not doubt that the man had once lived. The whole tone of the picture in the foreground was dark brown, and on the horizon one perceived the first glimmer of the coming dawn. I could discover nothing in the picture, and yet it had a quieting effect upon me, and I could have spent hours with my eyes fixed upon it. "Nothing surpasses a true human countenance," I said, "and even a Raphael could hardly have invented such a one as this."

dawn. I could discover nothing in the picture, and yet it had a quieting effect upon me, and I could have spent hours with my eyes fixed upon it. "Nothing surpasses a true human countenance." I said, "and even a Raphael could hardly have invented such a one as this."

"True," she said. "But now I will tell you why I wished to have that picture. I read that no-one knew the painter and no-one knew whom the picture represented. It is probably a philosopher of the middle ages. I wanted just such a picture for my gallery, for you know that no-one knows the author of the Theologica Germanica, and we have, therefore, no picture of him. I wished to try whether a portrait of an unknown person by an unknown artist would do for our German theologian, and if you have nothing to say against it, we will hang it up here . . . and call it the 'German Theologian."



In beautiful binding, with gold decorative panel, gilt edges and Frontispiece. A very handsome volume,

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WANDERERS.

. . BY . .

"SIDNEY PICKERING."

Bookman: "The interest is commanding, no-one having started with Madge in her search for her father will stop reading till she finds him. And her interview with the Rector at setting out is a touch of genius."

Standard: "It is fresh and romantic, has atmosphere and carries the reader along. A new idea in English fiction."

Spectator: "Mr. Pickering is to be congratulated alike on his choice of theme and the freshness and sympathy of his treatment."





MR. JOSEPH HOCKING.

Mr. Joseph Hocking has written more than one "novel with a purpose." This being so, it devolves upon his publisher—and for two reasons— to make it clear that Mr. Hocking's only purpose in "The Birthright" and "And Shall Trelawney Die?" was to write romance, "naked and unashamed"-romance which, while absolutely pure and munly in tone, shall have no other purpose than to give readers their fill of fun, fighting, and love-making. It is necessary to make this explanation, first, because readers might mistakenly buy the books expecting to find Mr. Hocking preaching a "crusade," and secondly, because those who can and do enjoy a stirring romance might be prevented from doing so from the belief that these were books with a purpose. Their only purpose is to keep the reader wide-eyed and wakeful when he might otherwise be in bed, and for this purpose it would be difficult to instance likelier volumes. They bristle with incident and adventure, and one is hurried on breathlessly from chapter to chapter. The general reader will pronounce both books "rattling good stories," and schoolboys will for once be in accord with the "Spectator," and pronounce them "as good as Stanley Weyman or Conan Doyle."

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THE BIRTHRIGHT.

By JOSEPH HOCKING,

Author of "All Men are Liars," "Andrew Fairfax," &c.

The Spectator: "This volume proves beyond all doubt that Mr. Hocking has mastered the art of the historical roman-'The Birthright' is, in its way quite as well constructed, as well written, and as full of incident as any story that has come from the pen of Mr. Conan Doyle or Mr. Stanley Weyman.

Daily Chronicle: "We read Mr. Hocking's book at a sitting; not because we had any leisure for the task, but simply because the book compelled us. . . . We hold our breath as each chapter draws to an end, yet cannot stop there, for the race is unflagging. We congratulate Mr. Hocking upon his book, for it is a great advance upon anything he has done. We prophesy a big public for 'The Birthright.

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AND SHALL TRELAWNEY DIE?

By JOSEPH HOCKING.

Echo (Front page article—Novels and Novelists): "Admirable stories, quite simple in construction, related in vigorous simple in construction, related in vigorous English, replete with exciting incident, and abundantly enriched with local colonr, they hold our attention in tight grip from start to finish."

The Methodist Times says: "Two of

the best stories of the year." Two of the best stories of the year."

The Weekly Sun says: "An engaging and fascinating romance. The reader puts the story down with a sigh, and wishes there were more of these breezy Cornish uplands, for Mr. Joseph Hocking's easy style of narrative does not song tire." not soon tire.

The Guardian says: "There is nothing pessimistic nor fin de siècle in Mr. Hocking's writings, but a bright, hopeful tone; an air, as we may say, of goodness; genuine romance in treating love, with real feeling for all the ties of home life.





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